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**HISTORIC  
CAUGHNAWAGA**

## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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**THE CANADIAN MARTYRS**—Eight pamphlets, 24 pp. each, 8vo, paper. THE MESSENGER PRESS, Montreal.



# HISTORIC CAUGHNAWAGA

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TO . THE . MEMORY  
OF  
THE . HEROIC . MISSIONARIES  
WHO . LABOURED  
AMONG  
THE . INDIAN . TRIBES . OF . AMERICA  
IN . PAST . CENTURIES  
THIS . WORK  
IS . HUMBLLY . DEDICATED



## PREFACE

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*THERE are few spots in America that recall more vivid historic memories than the old village of Caughnawaga lying peacefully on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, ten or twelve miles west of the city of Montreal. Its proximity to the great Canadian metropolis has not robbed this quaint Indian village of its aboriginal atmosphere; nor has intercourse with white neighbours deprived its citizens of many of their ancient racial traits. Angular features, piercing black eyes, the guttural accents of the native language, the swarthy bronze complexions in evidence everywhere—all betoken the survival of a remnant of the once doughty Iroquois, who for nearly a hundred years spread terror and desolation among the early European settlers on this continent.*

*Founded by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, the mission of Caughnawaga—or Sault Saint-Louis, as it was called during the French régime—had its share in many of the religious and political events which fill the pages of Canadian history. During its existence of two hundred and fifty years, the village often witnessed memorable scenes, when haughty chieftains, surrounded by their braves in paint and feathers, seized the tomahawk and started on the war-path as allies of the French; or when in times*

*of peace they mingled with distinguished visitors like Count Frontenac, the Marquis de Beauharnois, Chevalier de Callière, the Marquis de la Jonquière, whom they received with military honours, Comte de Bougainville, who consented to adoption into their tribe, General de Montcalm, who chanted with them their stirring war-songs, the De Vaudreuils, father and son, and other French celebrities; or when, as docile children of the Catholic Church, the only power that ever curbed their savage independence, they humbly listened to distinguished missionaries, such as Fremin, Chauchetière, Cholenec, Bruyas, De Lauzon, the De Lambervilles, Lafitau, the historian Charlevoix, and dozens of other Jesuits, whose names Bancroft, Parkman, Gilmary Shea, De Rochmonteix, and Atherton have made so familiar.*

*Documents, still preserved in the archives in Paris, show that this obscure village on the St. Lawrence river gave many an anxious hour to the statesmen of Old and New France in their endeavours to disentangle Indian affairs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nor had conditions changed very much in later times when—even in the nineteenth century—Caughnawaga warriors crossed the Atlantic and summoned British officials to listen to their grievances and to render justice to a nation “which once treated kings on a footing of equality.”*

*The little village played its part in public affairs, but it was always essentially an Indian missionary centre, founded in 1667 as a refuge for the Iroquois converts to the Christian faith, just as Lorette and Sillery had been founded for the Hurons and the*



*Algonquins, a few years earlier. "The missionaries," wrote Charlevoix, "after having watered the country with their sweat and some of them even with their blood, lost all hope of establishing Christianity on a solid basis among the Iroquois, but not of bringing at least a large number of them under the yoke of religion. They were convinced that God had His chosen souls among those barbarians as He has in every other nation, but they had long felt that, in order to give practical effect to their conviction, they would have to separate them from their fellow-countrymen and place them somewhere in the French colony, not merely those who were already converted but also those who had a leaning towards Christianity."*<sup>1</sup> It was this conviction that brought about the foundation of Caughnawaga and made it a flourishing mission during the whole of the French occupation.

After the cession of Canada to England, in 1763, the Caughnawaga Indians held fast to their faith and to their French missionaries, but they yielded entire allegiance to the British Crown. Sir William Johnson, whose prestige rivalled that of any of the governors of the old régime, exercised his influence and reconciled them to the change of flags; and, when the occasion offered, the warriors fought as bravely and died as stoically as they did under the French. But the gradual development of the last hundred years and the settling of the country in the ways of peace, have driven the Iroquois of Caughnawaga into comparative obscurity. Their peaceful

1. CHARLEVOIX: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. III, p. 176.

*and civilized descendants still remind us, by way of contrast, of the active and sanguinary part their ancestors took in furnishing material for the history of the heroic age of Canada.*

*For the present work we have taken our facts wherever we could find them. The Jesuit Relations, the Dominion archives at Ottawa, the diocesan archives of Quebec and Montreal, the Caughnawaga archives, the archives of Laval University, Charlevoix's Histoire de la Nouvelle France, de Rochmonteix's Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France, the ten volumes of Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York, Le Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, the Aulneau Letters, manuscripts left by missionaries, notes gathered here and there, have all been utilized with the design of putting together into a connected story whatever concerned Historic Caughnawaga.*

*Like the lonely miner who penetrates a wilderness for the purpose of digging out its treasures, so we, too, have tried to blaze a new trail through a wilderness of books and musty documents for the purpose of adding a few fresh pages to the history of the American missions. If we have overlooked facts worth recording, or if we have failed to place recorded facts in their true perspective or to give them their full historic value, may we not claim a pioneer's privilege of pleading loneliness on the trail and obstacles encountered on the journey?*

E. J. D.

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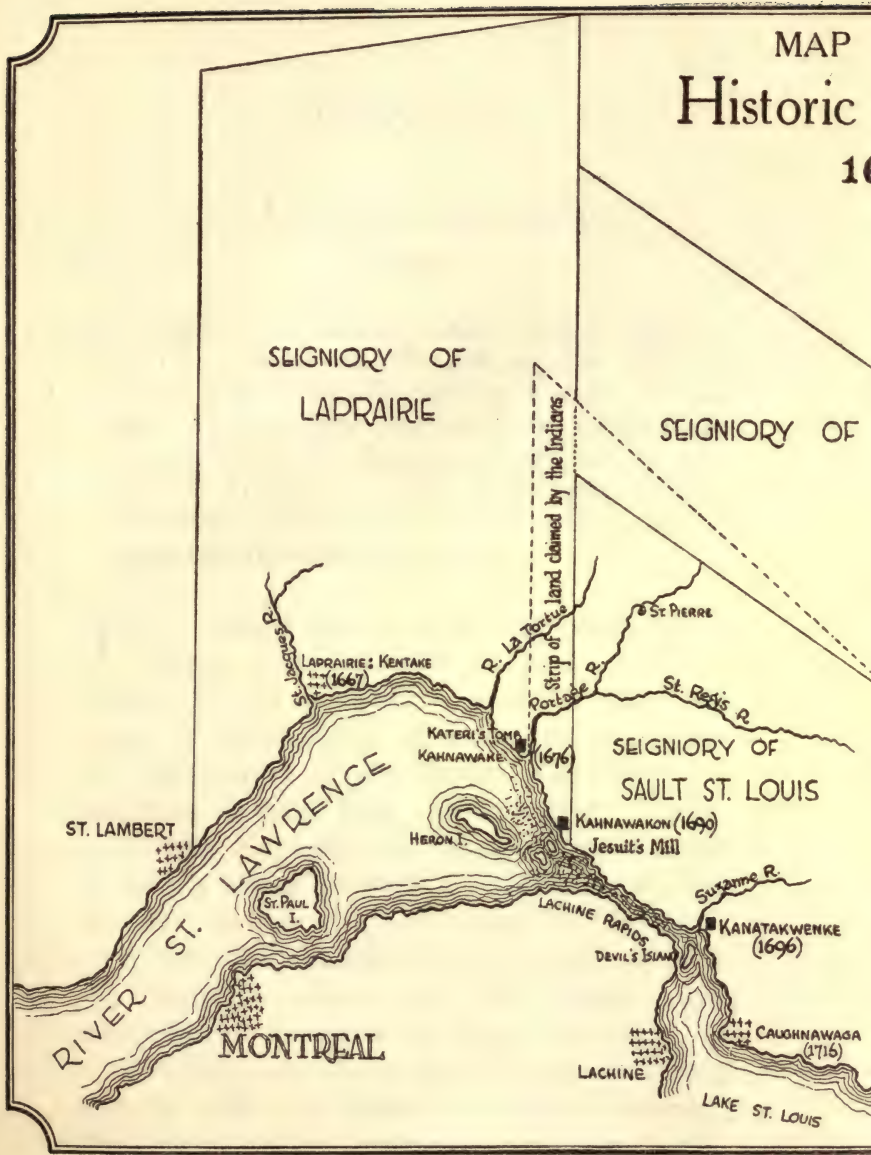
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# MAP Historic 10



ILLUSTRATING  
Caughnawaga  
67-1890

LA SALLE (RENÉ CARTIER)

SEIGNIORY OF  
CHATEAUGUAY

CHATEAUGUAY RIVER



## CHAPTER I

### The Laprairie Foundation

1667-1675

*The Iroquois Confederacy—First Hostile Relations with the French—Fur Traders and Fur Trading. Trials of the French Colony—De Tracy's Expedition—Treaty of 1666—The Jesuits in the Cantons. Arrival of the first Converts at Laprairie—Opposition of Frontenac—Abuse of the Liquor Traffic. Conversion of the Great Mohawk—Visit of Bishop Laval and Intendant Duchesneau.*

THE Iroquois are probably the most famous Indian tribe mentioned in early American annals. In the seventeenth century, when they began to claim public attention, they occupied the greater part of the territory now known as the State of New York, the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas having united to form a strong League, or Confederacy, of Five Nations. Fortunes of war forced the Tuscarora tribe into this Confederacy in the first years of the eighteenth century, and the Iroquois were afterwards known as the Six-Nation Indians.

Historians give them credit for great cunning and for skill and daring in military strategy. They were fearless, prompt in resenting insults, implacable in their hatreds, inhuman towards

their enemies, their vengeance being satisfied only after they had inflicted the extreme limit of cruelty on all who fell into their hands. Prisoners taken by them were subjected to terrible tortures, their scalps were torn off, their flesh was cut away piecemeal and devoured before their eyes. If the victims survived these ordeals they were usually burnt at the stake.

Owing to the warlike nature of the Iroquois and their desire for conquest, large numbers of them were continually invading the villages of neighbouring tribes; but "their invasions were simply raids, and they came and went leaving wreck and ruin in their track, much like the Tatars when they invaded Hindustan, or the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, when they overran Europe."<sup>1</sup>

From the first years of the Canadian colony, for reasons which have only been partially explained, the Iroquois became the relentless foes of the French, and although later in the seventeenth century, through heroic missionary effort, large numbers of them accepted the religion of the French and professed it whole-heartedly, they never became fully reconciled politically to the French. Some historians hold Champlain responsible for this hostile attitude to his countrymen, notably for the lack of judgment he displayed in forming an alliance with the Algonquin and the Montagnais Indians. But the well-known character and subsequent career of the noble

1. BUELL: *Sir William Johnson*, New York, 1903, p. 83.



founder of Quebec inclines one to believe that too much emphasis has been placed on this incident. In the early days of the colony these two tribes were Champlain's nearest neighbours. He would have to deal with them continually, especially in the fur trade, and it was only the part of prudence to cultivate their friendship. Unhappily these new allies were at war with the Iroquois, and Champlain had to pledge himself to do his share in fighting their battles. Hostile clashes were expected, now and then, but their consequences could not have been anticipated. Those that did occur in 1609, 1610, and 1615 had undoubtedly an important bearing on the religious and civil history of New France.

The details of Champlain's first encounter are taken from his own writings, from which it would appear that on the evening of July 20, 1609, while on a voyage of exploration along the shore of the lake which bears his name, accompanied by a few Frenchmen and about sixty Montagnais, he ran across a party of Iroquois. These Indians recognized the enemy with whom they were at war, and immediately despatched envoys to know whether or not they wished to fight. The Montagnais, relying on the valour of their white companions, replied that they desired nothing better, but as it was too late that night to distinguish friend from foe, they would put off the battle till sunrise. Champlain himself tells us what happened on the following morning.

"My Frenchmen were concealed in separate canoes belonging to the Montagnais," he writes. "After equipping ourselves in light armour, each of us seized an arquebus and went ashore. Leaving their barricade, the enemy, numbering about two hundred strong and robust men, came toward us with a gravity and an assurance that greatly pleased me. Our Indians told me that those who carried the lofty plumes were the chiefs and that I should do all I could to kill them. I promised to do my best . . . . When I saw them preparing to shoot their arrows at us, I raised my arquebus and aiming directly at one of the chiefs, fired; two of them fell dead at this shot, and one of their companions received a wound of which he afterwards died. I had put four balls in my arquebus . . . . The Iroquois were greatly surprised at seeing two of their men killed so suddenly, notwithstanding the fact that they were provided with arrow-proof armour of woven cotton thread and wood . . . . Whilst I was reloading, one of my companions fired a shot, which so astonished them anew that, seeing their leaders slain, they lost courage and abandoning the field, fled into the forest; whither I pursued them and killed some others." <sup>1</sup>

We have here, in a few words, the origin of an enmity which brought about the slaughter of hundreds of French settlers and which, a little less than a century and a half later, as an indirect

1. *Œuvres de Champlain*, Quebec, p. 170.

aftermath, brought about the loss of the French colony itself. "Strange fact this," writes a modern author, "which befell the just and humane Champlain; that stumbling on, in his ignorance of Indian politics and power, he should by one blundering shot, on the shores of the lake that was to bear his name, decide the character of a civilization and forfeit in after years a continent to France."<sup>1</sup>

This first sanguinary meeting with the French taught the Iroquois the efficacy of firearms. In exchange for furs, they could easily procure these weapons from the Dutch who were soon to settle on the banks of the Hudson. In a very few years, then, they had discarded their bows and arrows for powder and shot, and with this new power of destruction, added to their craftiness and daring, their hostility became an element with which the French and their Indian allies had to reckon. The Iroquois had, between 1642 and 1649, slain several members of the Jesuit Order who were engaged in preaching the Gospel; they had destroyed the Huron missions on Georgian Bay, the Montagnais between the Saguenay and Quebec, the Algonquins on the Upper Ottawa, the Neutral nation along Lake Erie, and they had begun the extermination of the peace-loving Attikamegs on the Upper St. Maurice.

The white population, then growing slowly in numbers, did not fare much better. The Iroquois

1. MURRAY: *Lake Champlain and Its Shores*, p. 67.

had, by their constant raiding, struck terror into the hearts of the settlers along the St. Lawrence; they infested the waterways; they paralyzed every effort at colonization; and so desperate had the outlook become that, had it not been for the hope that sooner or later something more substantial and more permanent than the fur trade would be fostered by the Home government—such as the tillage of the soil on a large scale—the colonists would have had to return to France, and the entire country would probably have been abandoned to its original barbarism.

And yet, in spite of Iroquois invasions and threatened invasions, the fur trade held the close attention of the officials of the infant colony; the beaver and his pelt were the chief concern of New France in the middle of the seventeenth century. The traffic was in the hands of the West India Company, a powerful organization which, up to 1674, practically monopolized the trade of France in America, extending its operations from the Gulf of St. Lawrence westward to the region of the Great Lakes.

The Indians were masters in the trapper's art and large numbers were employed in the service of the company; but Frenchmen were also attracted to the wild life of the woods. Their love of adventure as well as the hope of gain urged them to range far and wide, seeking the skins of animals. Usually young, intrepid, inured to hardship, those white men spent the greater part of the year away from their homes, paddling over



lakes and rivers in summer, or trudging through the thick forests on snowshoes in winter, returning usually in the springtime to the company's depots in Montreal or Quebec, with their canoes laden to the water's edge with furs. The king's vessels carried the precious cargoes home to France, where they were sold and distributed throughout Europe.

While the revenue derived from the fur trade gratified the French officials at Quebec and helped to repay the royal treasury for the expenses of colonial administration, it was rather keenly felt that this traffic alone could never put New France on a permanent basis. Farmers were needed to cut down the primeval forests, plough the land, and plant, and sow, and harvest golden grain, for only after New France had begun to draw wealth from its own virgin soil would it become a self-supporting colony.

Large tracts of land, or seigniories, along the St. Lawrence and its tributaries, had already been granted to prominent individuals who had found favour with the King of France; these beneficiaries, in turn, as petty feudal lords, were ready to parcel out their grants to tenant farmers, or *censitaires*, who would promise to undertake the work of cultivation. Once the dense forests had been laid low, rich soil would reveal itself everywhere, awaiting the brawn and energy of the hardy habitant to give forth of its abundance to meet every want. The project had in it every element of success; a rural people free from molestation and growing yearly in numbers meant social

ease and economic prosperity; but the whole scheme was inoperative as long as the savage Iroquois were at liberty to wander over the land, slay the inhabitants and burn their homes.

New France could not look on complacently at the extermination of its heroic settlers, those voluntary exiles from the mother country, the bone and sinew of the budding colony, who were taking up land along the St. Lawrence. A strong appeal was made to Louis XIV for soldiers to protect them, and in the year 1665, M. de Prouville de Tracy, accompanied by the Carignan-Sallières regiment, was sent to Canada with orders to crush the treacherous Iroquois.

This distinguished French officer, fresh from feats of arms over the Dutch in the Antilles, had hardly landed on Canadian soil when he began his work. The enemy usually made their hostile incursions by water; De Tracy's first care was to build small forts along the Richelieu river and Lake Champlain, a precaution which did not at first inspire the Mohawks with any great concern. Those haughty Indians scoffed at French forts and palisades; their frequent successes had made them consider themselves more than a match for the French; and, besides, they could rely for aid on the English and the Dutch at Albany, who were then seeking an alliance.

One immature attempt to subdue them in the winter of 1665-66 by Sieur de Courcelles, Governor of Montreal, resulted in a repulse for the French arms, a disaster which was soon to be avenged



by de Tracy. In the following July, this hardy veteran, although nearly seventy years of age, sailed up the Richelieu and Lake Champlain with thirteen hundred soldiers and penetrated into the very heart of the Mohawk country. But fleet-footed scouts kept the Indians informed of his movements, and as he approached they fled and hid themselves in their thick forests. Not being able to reach the Iroquois themselves, the French soldiers had to be satisfied with burning the villages and destroying the hoarded corn of the Mohawks, who were the most easterly of the Five Nations. It was De Tracy's intention to work similar destruction in the other cantons further west, but the season was advancing and the prudent general judged that, if the Mohawks alone felt the weight of his resentment, he had at least given the rest of the Confederacy a salutary lesson.

The sequel proved that he was not far astray. The Iroquois had been deceived in thinking that soldiers fresh from Europe would not dare attack them in their fastnesses, and the spectacle of their cabins and crops reduced to ashes, and the fear of famine during the coming winter of 1666-67, impressed them so deeply that they demanded a cessation of hostilities. This was the beginning of a peace which lasted eighteen years, and which was to have an excellent effect on the affairs of the French colony. The settlers could now take time to breathe, and they profited by this breathing space, not merely to push the fur trade and colonization, but also to extend missionary effort.

The Jesuits had been labouring in Canada since 1632. From Gaspé to the Great Lakes members of their Order had left traces of their sweat and blood; and, dauntless in their zeal, they were first to profit by the peace with the Iroquois. The treaty of 1666 had hardly been promulgated when they were on the way with their message of salvation to the cantons along the Mohawk river. In 1667, three Jesuits, Jacques Fremin, Jean Pierron, and Jacques Bruyas, men whose names were destined to live in Canadian annals, were preaching the Gospel where the ruins and ashes of De Tracy's passage during the previous summer were still visible.

Ossernenon, the scene of the massacre of Father Isaac Jogues and his companions, Goupil and De la Lande, a score of years before, had been burned down during the French invasion; but the Mohawks had started to build a new village near Kahnawaké,<sup>1</sup> a small rapid a short distance eastward. It was there that the three missionaries began their labours; three others, Julien Garnier, Pierre Milet, and Étienne de Carheil, soon followed them and began to preach in other villages. Before the close of 1668, not only the Mohawks, but also the Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and the fierce Senecas, all had missionaries studying their idioms. In a letter to her son, in the same year, the Venerable Marie de l'Incarnation wrote: "Since we have begun to enjoy the blessings of peace the

1. Called Gandaouague by the French and Kaghnuwage by the Dutch settlers. An Iroquois word signifying: *At the rapid*.

missions are flourishing. It is a wonderful thing to witness the zeal of our Gospel labourers. They have all left for their posts, filled with the fervour and the courage which gives us hope for their success.”<sup>1</sup> Those tireless men were continually on foot, travelling from village to village through the Iroquois cantons, baptizing dying children, healing the sick and instructing adults in the truths of Christianity.

One of the consoling features of their first two years of apostleship was the discovery here and there of captives, chiefly Hurons, who had persevered in the faith, even in their captivity. Father Fremin found in a Mohawk village forty-five old-time Christians who had kept up their religion so well that he would not have believed, had he not seen, how deeply rooted piety was in the souls of those poor captives, who, although so long without help from their pastors, far surpassed the general run of Christians. “They came to the sacraments,” he writes, “they have their children baptized, and they pointed out the spot where they assemble every evening without fail to maintain their fervour by the prayers which they offer together.”<sup>2</sup> The Iroquois had captives from many nations, “having made conquests in every part of Canada,” and as they were influenced by the edifying example they had before their eyes, they easily yielded to the invitation to accept

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Vol. II, p. 402.

2. *Jesuit Relations*, (Clev. edit.), Vol. LI, p. 211.

the Christian faith. Opportunities for instructing captors and captives were numerous; the Jesuits were reaping the fruits of their zeal; many fierce Iroquois were becoming fervent neophytes.

In the colony itself the advent of peace gave a fresh impetus to agriculture and to the fur trade. The various waterways were now freed from lurking foes, and cargoes of furs began to arrive more frequently than ever at the depots of the company at Montreal, Three Rivers, and Quebec. The peasants, on the other hand, relying on the protecting power of the soldiery, no longer hesitated to go beyond the doorsteps of their palisaded homes, nor did they fear to meet Indians skulking behind every tree. A feeling of security encouraged them to tillage, and turned large numbers of Frenchmen from the roving life of the fur trader to the peaceful cultivation of the soil. This was one of the most practical results of the treaty of 1666, for many of these hunters were young men, and the ease with which they adopted Indian life and Indian customs was commented on and resented by the governor and the intendant in their correspondence with the Court of France.

While the Jesuits deplored the growing evil as thoroughly as did the civic officials, they welcomed the change which was taking place, for they knew well that morality and sound citizenship needed a healthy environment in which to flourish, and that these virtues could not take root in the hearts of men who lived abandoned lives among



pagan savages. If the colony were to have any degree of permanency, and if religion were to exercise its salutary influence, more attention had to be given to the cultivation of the soil and to the grouping of colonists.

The Jesuits had already begun on a small scale to do their share in this noble work, but up to the year 1666 their efforts were confined to their own estates in the neighbourhood of Three Rivers and Quebec.

In 1647, Sieur de Lauzon, a royal councillor in the Parliament of Bordeaux, had made them a gift of land <sup>1</sup> on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, two leagues, or thereabouts, in width, by four in depth, extending from a point opposite St. Helen's island almost to the foot of the Lachine rapids, then known as Sault Saint-Louis. Following the example of other similar beneficiaries, they had begun to divide their seigniority among small farmers who were willing to cut down the thick forests which grew to the water's edge, but the Indian peril thwarted all development before 1666. Now that peace had arrived and the call had come for a more intense movement in colonization, they resolved to throw the de Lauzon grant wide open to farmers, and confided the enterprise

1. Concession du 1er avril, 1647, faite par le Sieur de Lauzon aux révérends Pères Jésuites, de deux lieues de terre le long du fleuve St-Laurent, du côté du sud, à commencer depuis l'Ile Ste-Hélène jusqu'à un quart de lieue au-delà d'une prairie dite la Madelaine, vis-à-vis les isles qui sont proche du Sault de l'Isle de Montréal, espace qui contient environ deux lieues le long de la dite rivière St-Laurent, sur quatre lieues de profondeur dans les terres, tirant vers le Sud. — *Registre d'Intendance*, Nos 2 à 9, folio 125. (BOUCHETTE). This gift was confirmed by Louis XIV at St-Germain-en-Laye, March 12, 1668. — *Édits et Ordonnances Royales*, 1854, I, 105.

to Father Pierre Raffeix, a native of Auvergne, France, who had reached Canada in 1663.

On his arrival this zealous man had been appointed to work among the Cayugas, but the unrest which had been developing in the Iroquois cantons delayed his departure for that dangerous post. As chaplain he had accompanied De Tracy in the expedition against the Mohawks; he was now to signalize himself at Laprairie as a promoter of colonization. In 1667, several French families had, at his invitation, grouped themselves around the little rustic dwelling and chapel, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, and built by the Jesuits as a place of rest for their missionaries, for it was there that those devoted men used to retire to recuperate after the fatigues of their ministry.

Meanwhile events were taking place elsewhere which were to give a wonderful impetus to the new venture. "While Father Raffeix was urging the colonists to settle at Laprairie," wrote Father Chauchetière, a few years later, "God was inviting the Indians to do likewise."<sup>1</sup> Conversions were multiplying in the villages along the Mohawk river, a gratifying outcome of the zeal of the Jesuits, but their previous experience of thirty-five years among the natives of Canada had taught them how inconstant their neophytes were when left to themselves, and how necessary it was to isolate them from their pagan brethren in order to preserve their new-found faith.

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.) Vol. LXIII, p. 151.



Everything was new to those Christian converts. They were strangers in the spiritual world they had just entered; new doctrines had to be accepted; new laws and new practices were henceforth to guide their lives; traditions of centuries of superstition had to be outlived and forgotten; they needed help and encouragement as well as a gradual initiation into the routine of Christian life. The results which had been obtained among the Algonquins at Sillery, near Quebec, and among the Huron remnants at Ste. Foye, had been so consoling that the Jesuits felt urged to begin a similar work near Montreal for their converts of the cantons.

Prudence urged them, however, to hasten slowly. An undertaking of this character, which entailed the transfer of the Iroquois from their ancient villages and their permanent settlement elsewhere, had to receive much preliminary consideration. The spiritual welfare of the converts should undoubtedly be the first care of the Jesuits, but the Indians had to feed and clothe themselves as well as pray, and their temporal welfare could not be overlooked. And yet from every point of view Laprairie seemed a favourable site for the new enterprise if the Order decided to undertake it.

The Iroquois, when not engaged in warlike expeditions, were practically a sedentary people. They raised crops of corn; they fished and hunted. If the tilling of the soil, to which they were accustomed in their cantons, did not appeal to them

at Laprairie, they could live by the chase in the neighbouring forests or by fishing in Lake St. Louis. The growing town of Montreal, only six miles away, would give them easy access to the fur company's depot where they could barter fin, fur, and feather. Add to this advantage another not less precious: as converts to the Christian faith they would receive further instruction and be free to practise their new religion in peace and quiet at Laprairie—something they could not do in their own cantons, owing to the vices of their fellow-tribesmen and to the proximity of the Dutch and English settlements. It was also hoped that the example of the Christian French would encourage them in the ways of right living.

For some time the new scheme had been engaging the attention of the missionaries; its very novelty was startling; various reasons made them doubt whether or not they should be able to carry it to success. The Iroquois were attached to their lands, their cabins and their friends; it was therefore feared that the invitation to quit their villages forever and live among the French would prove an obstacle to the formation of a mission near Montreal.

The Jesuits were busily at work maturing plans when an incident occurred which brought things quickly to a head. This was the auspicious arrival of Pierre Tonsohoten, an old convert whom Father Jacques Bruyas found among the Oneidas when he went to live among them. Tonsohoten had been baptized in the Huron country before

the dispersion of 1649, and though still living in an atmosphere of paganism in his own canton for nearly a score of years, and far removed from religious influences, he had evidently kept glowing in his soul the spark of faith. He was one of the few Christian Indians who welcomed Bruyas, the missionary who was beginning his forty years' ministry among the Iroquois.

The *Relation* of 1667 informs us that Tonsohoten counselled his wife Gandeakteua to take good care of the missionary and to "learn his prayer," a gentle hint that she should receive instruction from one who was able to impart it. Before her marriage this good Indian woman was a slave belonging to the Erie tribe, who had been adopted by the Oneidas. The influence of a Christian husband had made itself felt in her life, and although not yet baptized she was favourably disposed towards the faith which he professed. In 1667, some Indians were required to serve as guides to Charles Boquet, one of the *donnés*<sup>1</sup> in the service of the Jesuits, who was about to go to Montreal on business for the Oneida mission. Tonsohoten needed remedies which could not be obtained in his own country, and he seized the occasion to make the journey.

Accompanied by Gandeakteua and five other members of his tribe, he arrived in Montreal, where he and his companions were received by Father Raffeix. Tonsohoten was as yet the only Chris-

1. Laymen who accompanied the Jesuits in the missions.

tian in the band, but a new and strange vocation was awaiting all of them; the entire party were destined by Providence to be the foundation stones of a spiritual edifice which has lasted till our day. The *Relation* tells us that "when those poor barbarians, who knew not the meaning of priest, or church, or ceremonies, entered the chapel at Montreal for the first time, they were so delighted at what they saw that they forgot all about the Iroquois whence they came." <sup>1</sup>

Fearing that the good dispositions which he observed in his dusky visitors might quickly evaporate, Father Raffeix urged them to abandon their country at once for the new settlement at Laprairie. His invitation was accepted, and the seven Indians, now augmented by the arrival of five others, spent the winter of 1667-68 at the mission of St. Francis Xavier, receiving regular instruction in the Christian religion. In the following summer Raffeix took them down to Quebec, where the saintly Father Chaumonot prepared them for baptism, a sacrament which they received from the hands of Bishop Laval himself. In the autumn of 1668 they returned to St. Francis Xavier's and became remarkable for the fervour with which they persevered in the practices of the Christian life.

Tidings of this new venture soon spread throughout the Iroquois cantons and created a sensation. Converts began to leave their villages along the

1. *Jesuit Relations*, (Clev. édit.). Vol. LXIII, p. 153.



Mohawk river to settle at Laprairie. Pagan Indians, on their way home after the hunting season which was spent in the forests along the Upper St. Lawrence and the Ottawa, were drawn by curiosity to visit St. Francis Xavier's, and so impressed were they by the happiness they saw their countrymen enjoying among the French that a number of them resolved to stay and receive instruction. Others, on returning to the cantons, were loud in their praises of what they had seen at Laprairie and encouraged their friends to go to live there. One example, taken from the *Jesuit Relations*, will show the influence those visitors had on their relatives at home. "An Iroquois woman," writes the missionary at Onondaga, "who was baptized with the usual rites, together with her three daughters, two of whom were adults, bade adieu to our village some days ago, after dividing the little she owned among her relatives and friends, taking only a rush mat. Then, loaded with some provisions and preceded by her children, she happily abandoned this Babylon to go and dwell at Laprairie de la Magdelaine. She was attracted thither by her eldest son, who is as yet only a catechumen. This man, while hunting in that vicinity, went to visit some of his relatives there. He was so charmed with the happy condition of his countrymen in the mission of St. Francis Xavier that he resolved to settle among them, and he urged his mother and sisters

to do likewise. One of his aunts and his uncle followed him with the same intention.”<sup>1</sup>

The Jesuits who were active along the Mohawk river continued to send their catechumens to Laprairie, where their instruction was completed. In 1670, twenty Indian families settled there. They arrived in twos and threes with all their earthly goods, which usually consisted of a bark canoe, a few blankets, a gun, or a kettle in which they boiled their corn. These constant departures from the cantons began to arouse the anger of the pagans, who feared a lessening of their fighting strength; but the recriminations of their chiefs only made the new mission better known and helped to swell the stream of converts. Although only three years in existence, Laprairie had become a refuge of the Indians who sincerely wished to lead a Christian life, and it is worthy of remark that the greatest number of these new believers, and the most enthusiastic, came from among the Mohawks, the ruthless tribe who had in former years so strongly opposed the preaching of the Gospel and who had even shed the blood of their missionaries.

“To the great astonishment of both French and Indians,” wrote Charlevoix, “those formidable enemies of God and the French nation, touched by the grace which triumphs over the hardest and most rebellious hearts, were seen to give up all they held dear in the world and everything

1. *Jesuit Relations*, (Clev. edit.). Vol. LVIII, p. 207.



else that could hinder them from freely serving the Lord. This sacrifice was more heroic for them than for other people because there are none more attached than they to their families and their native soil." The blood of the martyr Jogues and his companions, Goupil and De la Lande, was bringing forth its first fruits.<sup>1</sup>

Father Claude Dablon, while on his way down from the Ottawa tribe to assume the direction of his Order in Canada, crossed over to Laprairie to note the progress of the work. He was forced to admire the fervour and the piety which reigned among the converts. The cabin which had been used as a chapel could no longer hold the French colonists and the Indians, and he authorized Raffeix to begin the construction of a church which should be large enough to hold all. He perceived also that the work of the ministry at St. Francis Xavier's had grown too much for one man, and he sent Raffeix an assistant in the person of Father Philippe Pierson, a young Jesuit who had been recently ordained at Quebec.<sup>2</sup>

In the year 1671, Raffeix yielded up his office as superior at Laprairie to Father Jacques Fremin and took the latter's place among the Senecas. Fremin, whom Dablon called "one of our ablest

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LII, p. 141.

2. Father Philippe Pierson was born, January 4, 1642, at Ath, in France; entered the Jesuit Order at Tournai at the age of eighteen and arrived at Quebec in 1666. He studied moral theology there for two years under Father Claude Pijart, and after his ordination was sent successively to Laprairie and Sillery to study the Indian tongues. From 1673 to 1686 he laboured in the Ottawa missions and died at Quebec in 1688.

and most saintly missionaries,"<sup>1</sup> was to remain in this responsible position for eleven years, and was to play such an important rôle in its development that he may be called its second founder. He was born at Rheims in 1628, entered the Jesuit Order in Paris in 1646, and arrived in New France nine years later. He was one of the first to go to the Iroquois country after the declaration of peace, and had laboured four years among the Senecas.

As soon as he was placed at the head of the French and the Indians at Laprairie, he started loyally to carry out the policy outlined by the civic authorities, of whom Count Frontenac, the Governor of Canada, was at that moment the spokesman, a policy which called for the gradual assimilation of French life and customs by the Indian converts. In a letter to the King of France, a few years later, Frontenac wrote:

"Since I have been in this country there is nothing I have laboured at more zealously than to induce everybody, whether ecclesiastical or secular, to rear and support some Indian children and to attract their parents to our settlements, the better to instruct them in the Christian religion and in French customs. I joined my example to exhortation, having always brought up some in my own family and elsewhere at my own expense, and I have impressed continually on the Ursulines and on the Jesuit Fathers not to in-

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LIX, p. 81.

culcate any other sentiments in those under their control."

Frontenac's theory was plausible enough, but experience was soon to teach Father Fremin that putting it into practice was not so simple as it seemed; nor was the contact of the French and Indians producing the effects the governor had hoped to obtain. For many years the liquor traffic had been working havoc in the colony. Brandy was carried by the fur traders on their hunting expeditions and given to the unfortunate Indians, who became crazed through drink and committed all kinds of excesses. The authorities in France, on several occasions, when informed of this abuse, urged the governors and intendants to crush the traffic; the Jesuit missionaries thundered against it; Bishop Laval forbade the distribution of liquor under pain of excommunication; but all these efforts were baulked by the West India Company, whose greed for the profits accruing from the fur trade outstripped any zeal it might have had for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Indians. The abuse had been going on for years; it was winked at by the French officials, and the sort of argument used by them, long before the foundation of the mission at Laprairie, is well illustrated in the following extract from a letter of Governor de Mézy to the Court of France.

"Before going further," wrote De Mézy, "it is well to inform you that Monsieur de Petrée and the Jesuit Fathers have forbidden all the

inhabitants of Canada, under pain of excommunication, to give liquor to the Indians, because, by becoming intoxicated to excess and thus depriving themselves of the use of reason, they fall into mortal sin. This prohibition is so strictly observed that no Frenchman will dare to give a glass of brandy to an Algonquin or a Huron. Doubtless a good principle, but one which is very ruinous to trade, because the Indians are passionately fond of liquor, and instead of coming to trade their peltries with us, trade them among the Dutch who supply them with brandy." De Mézy found that the episcopal prohibition was also a drawback to religion. "Having wherewith to gratify their appetite," he continued, "the Indians allow themselves to be catechized by Dutch ministers who instruct them in heresy. And still the Bishop of Petrée<sup>1</sup> and the Jesuit Fathers persist in their first resolve, without reflecting that prudence and even Christian charity inculcate the closing of the eyes to one evil to avoid a greater or to reap a good more important than the evil."

Even the great Colbert was influenced by this specious reasoning, and for the moment seemed unable to distinguish between those who were right and those who were wrong. After all, perhaps the abuses complained of by the clergy in New France had been really exaggerated; would

1. In 1658 Monsignor de Montmorency-Laval was appointed Vicar Apostolic of New France, with the title of Bishop of Petraea. When Clement X raised the vicariate apostolic to full episcopal dignity, in 1674, the prelate assumed the title of Bishop of Quebec.



it not be better for the sake of an alliance with the Indians to continue to supply them with the poisonous decoction? The King of France himself was undecided which side to take, and while he was busy weighing evidence and trying to formulate what answer he should give, the liquor traffic in the Canadian colony was being carried on more shamelessly than ever. It required the cataclysm of 1663 to make the guilty pause and think. "On the fifth of February, an earthquake shook the country, strong enough to extort from us a good act of contrition," wrote D'Avaugour, De Mézy's predecessor.<sup>1</sup> This extraordinary event drove terror into the hearts of white and Indian alike, but the effect was only temporary, and the traders, always ravenous for gain, continued as before to supply liquor to the Indians.

Various decrees were issued by the Sovereign Council at Quebec against the traffic, one of which, paradoxically enough, permitted the traders to sell liquor to the Indians, but forbade the latter to get drunk. In 1669, two years after the foundation of the mission at Laprairie, a decree was promulgated which prohibited, under severe penalties, the sale of liquor to the Indians in the woods; but even this regulation permitted it to be sold to them in the white settlements. Bishop Laval, a witness of the dreadful effects caused by the traffic, made the sale of liquor to the Indians a *reserved* case. This episcopal decision had the approval of the clergy; it was in vigour when

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 16.

Frontenac reached Canada in 1672, but it only irritated the new governor, who saw in it a man-œuvre of the Jesuits.

Father Fremin did all he could to prevent his wards at Laprairie from becoming contaminated. When he went thither, one of his first duties was to fight for the exclusion of a tavern which some French traders were trying to introduce. He appealed directly to Frontenac, who reluctantly granted his petition, and only under a plea of gratitude for the food and help which the missionary, in company with others, had been obliged to furnish the workmen during the building of the fort at Cataraqui. Knowing, however, how partial the governor was to liquor as a means of promoting trade with the Indians, the Jesuit was convinced that he would not always be so successful in his petitions; he was aware that sooner or later he would have to remove his neophytes to some spot where they would be isolated from the French, living in a mission exclusively their own.

Meanwhile the Indian converts continued to increase in numbers. In less than seven years the Mohawk warriors and their families hailing from the cantons had become more numerous at Laprairie than they were in their own country, a circumstance which enraged the pagan elders of the villages and disappointed the Dutch at Albany, who saw their influence fading before the activity of the Jesuit missionaries. Once the converts had arrived at St. Francis Xavier's and



had placed themselves under Father Fremin, the zealous missionary watched carefully over them, completed their instruction, checked their tendencies towards vice, especially towards brandy, and thus, as we read in a contemporary account, "saved them from the red sea of this wretched traffic which was likely to swallow them up."

Although the Mohawks were in the majority, the mission of St. Francis Xavier was ceasing to be made up exclusively of converts from that canton; the *Relation* for 1672 informs us that over twenty-two nations were represented at Laprairie. Fremin's firmness of character went hand in hand with his zeal for their spiritual and temporal welfare, but his ministry was also claimed by the French colonists, who were growing in numbers. It was on this account becoming a hard task for the missionary to give each and every convert the time and labour required to initiate him in Christian ways. The Indians had received the precious gift of faith, but they were not yet fully subdued; their old habits had not yet been rooted out; they were too often prone to assert their native independence.

For the zealous man all this was the cause of much anxiety, and rather than lose control of them by granting them too much freedom, he realized that the time had come when their chiefs should share their authority with him. In their own country the pagan Iroquois were accustomed to submit to the government of chiefs, whom they used to name *rotiianer*, elected by them-

selves, and it was decided that as Christians they could at least adhere to this phase of their native discipline. Among the tribes at Laprairie the Mohawks, Onondagas, and Hurons were the most numerous, and when the three bodies assembled for the purpose of electing their respective chiefs, Father Chauchetière, the chronicler of those early years, gives us the interesting detail that they could not agree among themselves.

"We regarded it as necessary to give each tribe its own chief," he wrote. "They had assembled for the purpose, but dissension arose in one faction. The Mohawks and Onondagas had immediately made their choice, but the Hurons were long in consultation. Finally becoming dissatisfied with the contest, the Hurons separated themselves from the others and departed to start a new mission beyond the river."<sup>1</sup> "The separation was painful," continued Chauchetière,<sup>2</sup> "and did not fail to keep minds at variance for some time. But finding everywhere the same faith and the same Gospel, and especially the union which prevails among the missionaries in

1. This mission had been founded by the Sulpicians in 1676, on their land at the foot of Mount Royal. It was made up of Iroquois from the cantons and Algonquin converts when the Hurons from Laprairie joined them. It grew so rapidly that twenty years later a division was made, two hundred Indians going to live at Sault au Recollet. In 1704 a second division took place. The Iroquois remained at Mount Royal and Sault au Recollet, while the Algonquins went to Baie d'Urfé and a number of Nipissings to Ile aux Tourtres, at the foot of the Lake of Two Mountains. In 1721 the Sulpicians brought the tribes together again and formed a large mission at Oka, where their descendants are still living.—*Mgr. Forbes in the Iroquois Almanac for 1899.*

2. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.) Vol. LXIII, p. 181.

Canada, the efforts of the demon were thwarted a second time."

While these events were taking place, the mission of St. Francis Xavier had to mourn the loss of Gandeakteua, the wife of Tonsohoten, one of Father Raffeix's first converts, who, after an edifying life, went to enjoy her reward. For several years this saintly Erie woman had been living among the Oneidas with her Christian husband when Father Bruyas arrived to preach the Gospel. The innocence of her life, even as a pagan, had prepared her for the light of faith. Once she received the sacrament of regeneration her whole life underwent a remarkable change. The missionary's words had a strong and immediate influence on her soul.

During her years at Laprairie she became a model of every virtue. She spent much time in prayer; her cabin was the refuge of the poor and the afflicted; her zeal for the conversion of her pagan countrymen was boundless; and the *Relation* tells us that many who were at Laprairie owed to her the grace of conversion. It was this pious Indian woman who, in 1671, helped Fremin and Pierson to found the Sodality of the Holy Family, an organization which is still flourishing after two hundred and fifty years. During her last days on earth she displayed an extraordinary fervour, and she passed away with the reputation of a saint. Father Chauchetière informs us that the memory of her virtues was fresh in the minds of all for many years after her death. Her hus-

band, Tonsohoten, who was also living in his first fervour, carried out her last wishes and distributed her few possessions among the poor.

The loss of the excellent Gandeakteua was in part compensated by a conversion which created a sensation throughout the Indian country. Athasata, an Iroquois warrior—known in American history as Kryn, the Great Mohawk—and famous for having led his tribesmen against the Mohigans in August, 1669,<sup>1</sup> and for having defeated them in battle—yielded to the influence of grace and became a fervent neophyte. The story of the conversion of this remarkable Indian is interesting. While on a hunting expedition, probably in the neighbourhood of the mission of Laprairie, he entered the cabin of a convert who was engaged in saying her prayers aloud. The pagan warrior listened in silence, admired the words she uttered, and then remarked to her that “the one who taught her had a great deal of sense.” He spent the rest of the winter with this family, and in the spring visited the mission, went to church, and recited his prayers with the rest of the people. The presence of the stranger excited the sympathy of Father Fremin, who completed his instruction and baptized him. This was all that was needed to change the Great Mohawk into an ardent apostle.

Returning to his canton, he spoke eloquently about the new Indian mission on the bank of the St. Lawrence; he described the edifying lives

1. *Docis. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, p. 250.



he had seen his converted countrymen leading there, and he urged the pagans to go thither without delay. So great was the ascendancy he possessed over the tribe and so persuasive were his exhortations, that a band of forty men, women, and children packed their bundles, quitted the Mohawk valley and, under the leadership of Father Boniface,<sup>1</sup> reached Laprairie, where baptism was awaiting them. In less than two years after Athasata's conversion, two hundred persons were added to the number of the Christians at the mission.

Notwithstanding their success, the Jesuits were not sanguine regarding the future of this venture. Under their leadership, St. Francis Xavier's was flourishing for the moment, but they were convinced that such a state of affairs had little hope of permanency as long as the hideous liquor traffic was permitted to exercise its baneful influence in the neighbourhood. Grave disorders were being caused by it, even at Laprairie. Besides, the mingling of the French colonists and the Indians was not producing the desired effects. The Jesuits had loyally endeavoured to carry out the policy of Frontenac, who wished the Indian converts to adopt French customs and French manners, but after an experience of seven years they had little hope of an improvement in conditions, and they

1. Father François Boniface was born at Arras on August 1, 1635, and entered the Jesuit Order at the age of seventeen. After several years in the professor's chair in France, he arrived in Canada in 1660. He died at Quebec in 1715, after having labored forty-four years in the Canadian missions.

set out quietly to look for another site whither they might remove their Christians.

In September, 1674, Father Antoine Dalmas, who had replaced Philippe Pierson as assistant at Laprairie and who, nineteen years later, was to fall a victim of an assassin near Hudson's Bay, visited Isle Jesus, looking for a spot to locate the mission of St. Francis Xavier. Accompanied by LeMoyne and Gagnier, "two of the best canoe-men in the neighbourhood,"<sup>1</sup> he started from the foot of the Island of Montreal, opposite the present village of Charlemagne, and paddled up the Rivière des Prairies. In a letter to Claude Dablon, his superior at Quebec, he gave many interesting details of the trip up that historic stream, with its rapids and portages, so familiar to his Jesuit brethren of the Huron mission earlier in the century. He finally reached the entrance to the Lake of Two Mountains, and spent a night with some Algonquins at the extreme westerly point of Isle Jesus. He was soon back at Laprairie, after passing through the Lachine rapids after dark, which was a rather daring feat, having made, in five days, a complete tour of the Island of Montreal.

Keeping in mind the object of his expedition, Dalmas summed up the results in a letter to Dablon, objecting to the transfer of the mission of St. Francis Xavier to Isle Jesus; first, because Montreal was too near, and the island would soon be crossed by the liquor traders when they

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LVIII, p. 117.





SITE OF ANCIENT KAHNAWAKĒ, SHOWING (X) THE TOMB OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA



learned where the Christian Indians were located; secondly, owing to the narrowness of the water passages at both ends of the island, the same traders could easily meet the Indians and debauch them with brandy; thirdly, opposition might be expected from the proprietors of any spot selected; and, finally, the difficulty of carrying provisions thither seemed too great, except in the spring, when the water in the river was high and canoeing easy.

"If, however," Dalmas adds, "it were decided to locate the converts on Isle Jesus, the missionaries would have to be assured that a ban were placed on liquor, or rather that the prohibition obtained from Frontenac for Laprairie should be extended to the new site." The considerations set forth by Dalmas were duly weighed by the Jesuits, and the difficulties and disadvantages attending the transfer of the converts appearing insuperable, they resolved to turn their attention elsewhere. Meanwhile Father Dalmas was called to exercise his ministry at Sillery.<sup>1</sup> He was succeeded by Father Pierre Cholenec, who had arrived from France that summer and was to spend sixteen years of his ministry at the mission of St. Francis Xavier.

The visit which Bishop Laval made to La-

1. Father Antoine Dalmas was born at Toure on August 4, 1636, and entered the Jesuit novitiate at Paris, at the early age of sixteen. He taught in various colleges and began the study of theology at Bourges in 1664. He was ordained in 1669, and two years later reached Quebec, where he spent a year in the study of the Indian language. He lived at Laprairie from 1672 to 1675, at Sillery from 1675 to 1681, and at Tadoussac from 1681 to 1691, when he started for Hudson's Bay. It was there he met his death at the hands of Guillory, a gunsmith in the employ of the fur company.

prairie in 1675 left a profound impression on the Indian converts. The pious prelate had not forgotten the little Oneida group whom he had baptized and confirmed at Quebec, seven years previously, and he had ever since taken a fatherly interest in their welfare. During his confirmation tour in the district of Montreal he learned that, owing to the activity and zeal of the missionaries at St. Francis Xavier's, a number of Indians had been prepared for the reception of that sacrament, and he resolved to visit them.

This news caused quite a commotion in the village, and although the converts had only two or three days at their disposal, they made great preparations for his reception. Quantities of branches were brought from the forests and planted on both sides of the avenue which extended from the chapel to the river. On the little wharf where the bishop was to land they erected a bower, decorating it with various kinds of foliage, in order that His Lordship might there receive a first address of welcome. They built a similar bower in front of the church, where the prelate was again to be harangued.

The day chosen for this visit was the Monday after Pentecost, May 26, 1675, and the Bishop of Quebec started in a canoe across Laprairie bay. "Happily," writes the chronicler, "the weather was very fine on the day he selected to honour us with his visit." At three o'clock in the afternoon his canoe came in sight. Father Dablon, who happened to be at Laprairie, im-

mediately embarked to meet His Lordship and greeted him a few hundred yards from the shore. At the same time, the church bell began to ring, and everybody hastened to the place where the bishop was to land. Father Fremin stood on the right at the head of the Indians; Father Cholenec on the left, and with him all the French people. When the bishop's canoe came within speaking distance, one of the captains called out in a loud voice: "Bishop, stop thy canoe!" The prelate yielded to their summons, as they wished to receive him in true Indian fashion. He halted to listen to two orators who addressed him in turn, assuring him of their appreciation of his coming and of their hope that his presence would bring them blessings from Heaven. They then invited him to come ashore that they might lead him to the church. Having landed and having robed himself in mozetta and rochet, the bishop gave his blessing to the crowd kneeling around him. Father Fremin intoned the *Veni Creator*, and a procession was formed along the shaded walk which had been made for the purpose. The bishop listened to three more harangues before the church was reached, where benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given. At the conclusion of this ceremony, perceiving that the Indians were still following him, he invited them into the missionary's house and gave them his episcopal ring to kiss and blessed them, adding a word of praise for those who, he was informed, were the most devout. Even some pagan Iroquois who had



recently arrived from their own country and who still breathed only war and arrogance, the *Relation* adds, received the episcopal blessing, "for they all paid respect and submission to His Lordship the same as our Christians gave, as if the presence of so good a pastor had changed them from cruel wolves into gentle lambs." Next day the Bishop of Quebec baptized four men and six women and officiated at three marriages. He celebrated Mass, during which the Indians chanted their hymns and received holy communion; he then administered confirmation to the French and Indians, eighty persons in all, Father Fremin interpreting the sermon while His Lordship preached. The rest of the day was spent in paying short visits to the cabins, which were decorated with branches of trees, handsomely wrought mats, rich furs, and delicately woven blankets. "The third morning, having been pleased to say Mass a second time for our Indians, who sang it very well, as they usually do, he set out for his return to Montreal." All the Indians gathered at the landing-place to receive his benediction once more, and then followed him with their eyes as far as they could see. Bishop Laval was profoundly moved by this novel experience, and he did not conceal his sentiments when he returned to Quebec. In a letter to France the same summer, Father Enjalran wrote: "Monsignor administered confirmation to eighty Iroquois there, and he told us that he had never

been so touched as when he saw the fervour of those new Christians.”<sup>1</sup>

Another visit to Laprairie, made four weeks after the departure of the Bishop of Quebec, also left a deep impression on the Indians and gladdened the hearts of Fremin and Cholenec. This was the arrival of Intendant Duchesneau, accompanied by the Governor of Montreal, François Perrot, and over fifty of the most notable persons of the colony. The large party crossed over the bay in twelve or fifteen canoes and were received at the landing-place by the Indians and the French. The intendant profited by his visit to give the Christian converts many marks of his friendship, and took part in the ceremony prepared for the feast of St. John Baptist which occurred on the following day. He held a general council of the various nations then living at Laprairie, and through his interpreter he praised them greatly for their zeal and fidelity in worshipping God and serving the King of France. He concluded this pleasant ceremony by distributing presents to the assembled tribes. Although the heat was unbearable that day, the distinguished visitor, we are told, provided a feast in the afternoon for the entire village, and returned to Montreal carrying away with him the gratitude of the dusky children of the mission.

Sieur Duchesneau had only recently arrived in Canada as the successor of Intendant Talon. From the beginning of his term of office his per-

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LX, p. 147.

sonal integrity commanded the respect of the entire colony; although, unhappily, his fearlessness and conscientious application to the discharge of the duties of his high position brought him into conflict with Count Frontenac and made him share with the Jesuits the hostility of that wrathful governor. However, as we shall soon see, his visit to Laprairie was a fortunate one for the Indian mission of St. Francis Xavier.

## CHAPTER II

### The First Migration

1676-1685

*Transfer of the Mission to Kahnawaké—Fervour of the Converts—Kateri Tekakwitha—Fremín's Voyage to France—Arrival of Father Bruyas—Daily Life at the Mission—Destruction of the Church. Efforts to Rebuild—Chauchetière's Chronicle—Rupture of the Peace of 1666—De la Barre's Expedition. Kahnawaké Fortified—Mgr. de Saint-Vallier's Testimony.*

THE visits of Bishop Laval and Intendant Duchesneau, in 1675, gave the missionaries an opportunity to discuss the future and outline a policy regarding the welfare of their converts. The French colonists were growing numerous at Laprairie, and the fur traders were as keen as ever in trying to introduce brandy among the Indians. With the exception of the liquor traffic, a matter in which he would never compromise, Father Fremín had always seconded the wishes of Frontenac in his endeavours to bring about the assimilation of the Indians and the white men; but the influence of white companionship had begun plainly to show its evil effects on the converts. Besides, the soil at Laprairie was not producing sufficient corn to support the Indians,

who were seriously considering the abandonment of the mission and a return to their old homes in the Mohawk country, unless something were done to help them.

The moment had come for the radical and long contemplated change. Frontenac had to be consulted, but the separating of the French and the Indians was so contrary to his policy that he treated the request with disdain. Intendant Duchesneau knew the importance of the Jesuits' appeal; he had been a witness of the evils they were trying to combat, and he took steps to meet their wishes. Land was needed to carry out their plans, and on his own authority, which was afterwards ratified by the King of France, he gave them a tract bordering on the western limit of their property at Laprairie and extending two leagues, more or less, along the St. Lawrence.<sup>1</sup> Thick forests still covered the ground and ran down to the river's edge, where the rapid known as Sault St. Louis had for countless centuries been tumbling over rocks and shoals and sending its echoes far and wide.

A site was chosen for the new village at the foot of this rapid, on a point formed by a small stream called the Portage, flowing into the St. Lawrence. "The river here forms a lake two leagues wide," wrote Chauchetière, "and the place

1. Concession du 29 mai, 1680, faite par Sa Majesté aux révérends Pères Jésuites, de la terre nommée le Sault, contenant deux lieues de pais de front; à commencer à une pointe qui est vis-à-vis le rapide St-Louis, en montant le long du lac, sur pareille de profondeur, avec deux isles, islets et battures qui se trouvent au devant et joignant aux terres de la Prairie de la Magdelaine.—*Registres d'Intendances*, Nos 2 à 9, folio 122.—BOUCHETTE.



where we are is so high that the waters of this great river fall with a loud roar and roll over many cascades, which frighten one. The water foams as you see it do under a mill-wheel, and yet we readily pass over it every day in our bark canoes.”<sup>1</sup>

Once the decision to move had been made, the Indians, who were just as anxious for the change as were their spiritual guides, began to fell the trees and clear the land for their new village; in a few months the site was ready for occupation. In July of the following summer, 1676, Father Fremin and his Christian Indians bade farewell to Kentaké—as they called Laprairie—and transferred their goods and chattels to the foot of the rapid: Kahnawaké or St. Francis Xavier of the Sault.<sup>2</sup> This removal was not accomplished without a great deal of trouble, the *Relation* informs us, and for the first few months all suffered much from the poverty of their surroundings. The missionaries had no other accommodation than a sorry lodge, and for a chapel a cabin of bark in which the superior dwelt in a corner

1. Sault St. Louis very probably received its name from an accident which befell one of Champlain's workmen named Louis, who was drowned in the rapid in 1611. Prior to that year the rapid was called in French *Le Grand Sault de la rivière du Canada*. Faillon writes that Louis was a young man in the employ of des Monts, much given to hunting, and had gone in a canoe with two Indians from Montreal to Heron Island. On his way home, having approached too near the foot of the rapid, his canoe upset, and he and one of the Indians lost their lives. From that time the old name ceased to be used. Faillon adds, "We believe that it was in memory of the death of young Louis that the name of his patron saint was given to the place."—*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, p. 131.

2. Kentaké: *at the prairie*. Kentucky, the name of a State in the American Union has the same meaning.—*Mgr. Forbes*. Kahnawaké: *at the rapid*. A name which recalls the ancient village on the Mohawk river. Caughnawaga is merely a modern variant.

arranged for the purpose.”<sup>1</sup> Before the close of autumn, the same year, however, Fremin and Cholenec had their own cabin; the Indians had built a church sixty feet by twenty-five, which was solemnly blessed, “and which,” wrote Chau-chetière, “is becoming illustrious on account of the favours which God showers upon those who go thither to pray to Him.”

The news of the transfer reached the Hurons of Quebec who had received the visit of the Oneida neophytes eight years previously. These Indians had changed their own abode in 1673, and were now living at Lorette, but the bonds of faith and friendship had kept them in touch with their Iroquois brethren at Laprairie. As a souvenir of the visit of 1668, which was still vivid in their memories, they sent a wampum belt to the new village at Kahnawaké.<sup>2</sup> The Iroquois attached it to a beam over the main altar of their church, where it ever reminded them of the message it was intended to convey, namely, that of a call to accept the Christian faith in its entirety and to make a strong fight against the evil—evidently the liquor traffic—which was aimed at the ruin of both missions. The Indians did what they could to adorn their church handsomely, the Mohawks distinguishing themselves in a special way by their zeal and liberality. Thenceforth the House of Prayer, which was exclusively their

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 191.

2. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 193. This wampum belt has survived the vicissitudes of two hundred and fifty years, and is still preserved as a priceless relic at Caughnawaga.

own, became the chief centre of attraction in the new village, and the religious services were carried out in it with all due solemnity.

During the amalgamation at Laprairie, the French colonists naturally claimed precedence in religious functions; the Mass and Vespers were chanted by them alone, while the Indians had to remain silent worshippers. Now that they were in their own village they did everything themselves, and found great pleasure in doing so. Father Chauchetière gives many intimate details which help us to form an idea of the religious life of the new mission at Kahnawaké, and of its converts. He tells us that the love the Indians had for their church services made it easy for them to learn the various chants by heart, such as hymns in honour of the Blessed Sacrament and of our Lady, and of the Confessors and Martyrs, the *Inviolata*, the *Veni Creator*, the Psalms, and more than thirty different hymns, to be sung during Mass as well as during Vespers and Benediction.

"Nor must I omit," he adds, "the ceremonies of the Purification, or those of Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday and the Assumption, at which they are present. They come to take part in them because these functions happen rarely, faith having given them much affection for these ceremonies. They learn them quickly and the women excel in them, for they sing very well and very devoutly. All who hear them are pleased. The boys have learned to serve Mass and are very eager to do so, being vested at all the cere-

monies as little acolytes. They know their duties so well that no one makes a mistake. People are astonished, and not without reason, when they contrast the yelling they hear in the woods with the spectacle they meet when they are in church.”<sup>1</sup>

The contrast was indeed striking; but it was also consoling, for the external forms of worship witnessed in the little temple, and the chanting indulged in so lustily, were merely manifestations of the intense fervour which was inundating the souls of those children of the forest, converts of the eleventh hour, who were tasting the sweetness of the service of God. Now that they were living by themselves and away from the demoralizing influences of white men, they gave free rein to their religious enthusiasm. No mission in America, or probably, elsewhere, was producing such examples of virtue and devotion as were witnessed at Kahnawaké.

Among those who were thus distinguishing themselves was an Iroquois girl who had been only a year at the mission, and who was already astonishing the Christians there by the holiness of her life. This saintly maiden was Kateri Tekakwitha, better known in later years as the Lily of the Mohawks. She was born in 1656, and was a child eleven years of age when Fathers Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierron visited her native village of Kahnawaké on the Mohawk river. Though still a pagan, she eagerly listened to their exhortations. A soul, naturally Christian, was al-

1. *Jésuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 211.



ready developing in the frail body of this child of the forest, and lofty ideals of the Christian life were beginning to dawn on her in all their beauty. She was eighteen when Father Jacques de Lamberville settled in her village. This Jesuit, who has left a name well known in Canadian missionary annals, began at once to instruct her in the elements of the faith. He was impressed with her simple candour, as well as the ease with which she assimilated the profound mysteries of religion. She craved for baptism and received this favour, after due preparation, on Easter Sunday, 1675.

The holy life led by Kateri Tekakwitha in her native village became a reproach to those around her. Fearing lest her pagan environment might be an obstacle to her perseverance in virtue, she resolved to quit her home on the Mohawk river for the mission at Kahnawaké, near Montreal; there she would be free to serve God as she wished to serve Him. But Kateri was an orphan and was closely watched by a cruel uncle; how was she to accomplish this long and difficult journey? It was a custom, which the missionaries had always encouraged, for the more fervent converts of St. Francis Xavier's to pay visits now and then to their former villages in the Mohawk valley. While there they deeply impressed the pagans with detailed accounts of the lives led by their converted countrymen in Canada, and of the happiness they were enjoying there, with the desire they had to see others sharing this happiness with them. A



letter from Father Bruyas to Cholenec, written from the Mohawk canton, describes the visit of three converted chiefs from Sault St. Louis and the edification they gave the pagans. "Your three good Christians arrived on the feast of St. Bonaventure," he writes. "I may say that God sent them to us at the right moment, when they were needed to accompany those who will return with them. What true Christians are your captains! They have changed the aspect of our little flock here during their short stay with us."

One of these apostles was Ogenratarihen, or Hot Powder, an Oneida Indian, formerly of Kahnawaké on the Mohawk, who is said to have been one of the slayers of Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lalemant, in the Huron country in 1649, and who, from the day he was baptized, displayed an admirable zeal for the conversion of his fellow-tribesmen. He made the journey to the cantons at regular intervals, and never came back to the mission at the Portage without being accompanied by a few well-disposed Indians who desired to be instructed in the Christian faith, thereby augmenting the number of Father Fremin's flock. On one of his visits to the Mohawk village, the young Kateri Tekakwitha expressed the wish to go to live in Canada, but she feared that the opposition of her uncle would prevent her from carrying out her design. Hot Powder made little of this, the only obstacle to her departure. Encouraged by this zealous apostle and by her own brother-in-law she secretly quitted her home and

reached Kahnawaké in the autumn of 1677, bringing with her a note from Father de Lamberville which read: "We are sending you a treasure; take good care of her."

The arrival of this saintly maiden proved to be a blessing for the mission of St. Francis Xavier. On Christmas day she was permitted to make her first communion, a sublime act which became a stimulus to her fervour. Henceforth her assiduity in praying and watching near the altar was admirable to witness. The more she prayed the more she was impressed with the greatness of God and her own unworthiness. She spent hours daily in heavenly converse, and her example became a powerful impetus to the spiritual life of the rest of the Christians. Other converts started to imitate her in her devotions, and the Jesuit *Relations* tell us that the fervour of the primitive ages of the Church was witnessed at the mission in the practice of penance and in the frequentation of the sacraments.

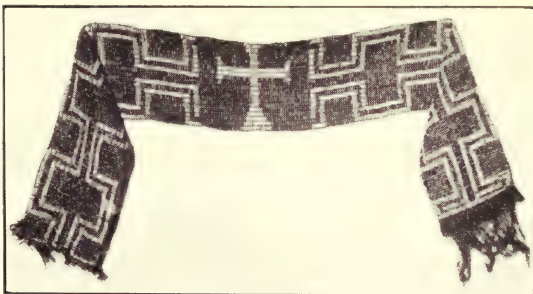
Meanwhile, amid the consolations which the edifying lives of their neophytes were giving the missionaries, what seemed to be a heavy cross threatened to weigh them down. In the autumn of 1678, the dread disease of small-pox broke out among the Indians at Kahnawaké and began to take its toll in death. This was a new experience for both Fremin and Cholenec; they knew not what effect it would have on the converts, especially the recent ones. The pagan Iroquois, as is well known from what happened in 1646, during

Father Jogues' sojourn on the Mohawk river, were persuaded that the abandonment of their ancient tribal superstitions and conversion to the Christian faith were the cause of their misfortunes; the rite of baptism in particular, they believed, brought diseases in its train. Happily, in the present instance, the victims were not numerous, and instead of being considered an affliction, the small-pox visitation had a salutary effect on the Indians. The deaths were so rare among the converts that their pagan visitors had before their very eyes a proof that it could not have been the sacrament of baptism that caused the plagues which occasionally appeared amongst them. On the contrary, the disease seemed to them to be a blessing in disguise, for the temporal affairs of the mission were never so prosperous as in 1678. The Indians were increasing in numbers and were becoming self-supporting.

"Our village is growing larger every year," wrote Chauchetière, "and we think that in two or three years all the Mohawks will be here. More than eighty have settled down recently. We have a large farm on which we keep oxen, cows, and poultry, and on which we raise corn for our subsistence. Some Indians get their land ploughed and harvest French wheat thereon instead of Indian corn. It is impossible to describe their joy when they can harvest from twenty to thirty bushels of this wheat and are able to eat bread from time to time. But as this sort of grain costs them too much labour, their usual



MONSTRANCE PRESENTED TO THE MISSION IN 1668



HURON WAMPUM BELT PRESERVED AT CAUGHNAWAGA





occupation is to plough the soil and plant Indian corn in it. The men hunt for their provision of meat; the women go to the forests to obtain supplies of wood. If the Indians were fed they would work much more than they do.”<sup>1</sup>

During the three previous summers the corn crop on the little island opposite their village had been devoured by worms. Wishing to take all precautions to ward off another similar disaster, the Indians begged Father Fremin to bless the island and the seed they had planted. “Seeing the faith of those poor people, the missionary crossed over in a canoe, and while all were kneeling around him full of faith and charity, he recited the prayers of the Church.” In the autumn the crop of corn was so abundant that the natives themselves were surprised at it, “there being no field at the Sault in which there were so many sheaves of corn as in the field which was on the island.”<sup>2</sup>

The mission of St. Francis Xavier had now been under way for three years and the spiritual fruits which were being reaped did not fail to attract the attention of the civil authorities. No one appreciated more keenly what was being done there than Intendant Duchesneau, who wrote to Colbert, on November 10, 1679, that “the Iroquois mission which was withdrawn from La-prairie de la Magdelaine is very numerous and very flourishing. The Jesuits are carrying out the

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXII, p. 169.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. LXIII, p. 207.

intentions of His Majesty and following the orders which you sent me. They have established a school to instruct the Indian children and bring them up in French ways.”<sup>1</sup>

This splendid testimony went to France in the same ship with a letter from Count Frontenac, who wrote to the king four days earlier: “The Jesuits, having pretended that intercourse with the French was corrupting the Indians and was an obstacle to the instruction they were giving them, Father Fremin, superior at Laprairie de la Magdelaine, far from conforming with what I told him were Your Majesty’s intentions, three years ago removed all the Indians who were among the French to a distance of two leagues further off, on lands obtained from Monsieur Duchesneau after his arrival in this country. I did not think it proper to give them the title until I had learned Your Majesty’s pleasure, for reasons I have the honour to submit which are important for his service and for the advantage and safety of the country.”<sup>2</sup>

The evident ill-will of the irascible governor did not impress the Jesuits very much. Their long experience among the various tribes had convinced them that they had adopted the only way of turning pagan Indians into staunch Christians and loyal subjects of France; they were not going to give up, without a struggle, the civilizing methods which were producing such good results

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les J.J. et la N. France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, III, p. 146.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 130.

at St. Francis Xavier's of the Sault. It was evident that Frontenac did not see eye to eye with them, but his attitude was unreasonable, and rather than submit to exigencies which might be the beginning of a long season of bickering and strife and which could only result in injury to their work among the Indians, they immediately sent Father Fremin to France for the purpose of placing their grievances before the Court and of assuring the confirmation of Duchesneau's grant.

The intervention of the missionary was not without some success, for five months later, April 29, 1680, Count Frontenac received the following letter from Louis XIV: "I have granted the Jesuits the concession they have asked me for at the place called the Sault, adjoining Laprairie de la Magdelaine, for the establishment of the Iroquois, and I have added to this gift the conditions which they asked for, because I am of opinion that this establishment is advantageous not only for the conversion of the Indians and for the maintenance of the Christian religion among them, but also for the purpose of making them familiar with the ways and manners of French living." <sup>1</sup>

Fremin's voyage to France was made not merely to secure the title to the property at Sault St. Louis, but incidentally to excite the interest of his generous motherland in the mission confided to his care. Tradition has it that, when he returned to Canada in the following year, he came laden with gifts, a few of which still exist; for

1. Canadian Archives, Corresp. Gen. 1679-1681

instance, the monstrance<sup>1</sup> and the altar-plate which are still in use at Caughnawaga.

During his absence in France the mission of St. Francis Xavier had become poorer through the death of Kateri Tekakwitha, who expired peacefully on April 17, 1680. The heroic life which this saintly maiden led during three years had been witnessed by all the people of the village, and an outburst of veneration was the immediate aftermath of her holy death. "A saint has lived amongst us and has just passed away," was the spontaneous verdict of her own people after Kateri had been laid in the grave. She was buried in the little cemetery close to the edge of the river, and her tomb became a trysting-place for pilgrims who began to invoke her intercessory power with God. The two sympathetic historians of her life, Fathers Pierre Cholenec and Claude Chauchetière, were then living at Kahnawaké. Cholenec was her spiritual director; but both assisted her during her last hours on earth; and none were better able to appreciate the virtues she practised and to make them known to the world. Both Chauchetière and Cholenec employed their spare moments, in after years, in recording the marvellous action of grace in the soul of this child of the forest, and it is to their records that writers have gone during the past two centuries for the

1. The monstrance bears the following inscription graven in poor French: "*Claude Prevost, ancien eschevin de Paris, et Elizabeth LeGendre, sa femme, mon donne aux RR. PP. Jésuites pour honorer Dieu en leur première église des Hiroquois, 1668.*" The date recalls not the year of the gift but that of the establishment of the mission.



information that saved the memory of the Lily of the Mohawk from oblivion.

Another incident happened during Father Fremin's absence in France which might have had serious results for the colony, and might have brought about the violation of the peace treaty entered into between De Tracy and the Five Nations. In a skirmish which took place near Fort Chambly a pagan Iroquois had killed a Mohigan chief, a crime of which a convert from Kahnawaké was accused. Athasata, the Great Mohawk, the chief of the mission, went to work to investigate the accusation, and quickly settled matters by showing that the accused convert had nothing to do with the murder. He even discovered that Jacques, another convert from Kahnawaké, had risked his life to save one of the Mohigans from the fire of the Iroquois. The captors had their victim already bound with cords and were about to apply the torch to the grass they had piled around him, when this brave Christian intervened. He told the infuriated Indians that until they had first killed him they must not touch their prisoner; that he was determined to die in defense of the treaty which had been concluded between the French and the Iroquois. The successful issue of the investigation, and the excellent service which the Great Mohawk rendered to the whole colony, added to the prestige which this remarkable Indian leader enjoyed.

Fremin did not remain in office long after his return from Europe. Eleven years of strenuous



labour at St. Francis Xavier's entitled him to a rest which, for this saintly man, meant merely a change of occupation. He was sent to the college of his Order at Quebec and was succeeded by Father Jacques Bruyas, one who was already a veteran in the ministry among the Iroquois. This distinguished missionary reached Canada in 1666, and was one of the three who entered the Iroquois cantons immediately after the De Tracy expedition. Going from village to village, during the dreary twelve years he remained there, he had acquired a profound knowledge of the Iroquois character, and he had begun the composition of a grammar of the language. It was Bruyas himself who wrote, "Canada is not a land of flowers; he who finds them must have walked a long time through briars and thorns." The flowers this zealous man sought were human souls, the souls of Indians, who, he was well aware, needed constant care and cultivation. He had always been a firm advocate of the migration of converts from the cantons to Canada. He consented to the departure of Tonsohoten and his companions in 1667, and during the intervening years he had been instrumental in sending many others thither. He was no stranger in Kahnawaké, being already well known to the large number he had met and instructed in their own country. When he became superior he set to work to carry on among them the duties which Father Fremin had been filling during the previous eleven years.

The experience of the missionaries had taught them that the best way to keep the converts in the path of virtue was to keep them occupied. During the hunting season this precaution was not necessary, as the Indians were always going from place to place and had no time to squander in idleness; but during the summer months, while they remained at home, there was danger of abuses creeping into their lives, and the ingenuity of the Jesuits was taxed in order to keep their converts busy. Sometimes they urged them to till the soil in greater area and raise more corn to supplement the food supplied by the chase; sometimes they counselled them to enlarge their cabins, and thus make home life more comfortable; again they sent them to cut firewood in the forests for the winter and thus save the labour of their women; at other times they urged the members of their flock to complete the building of their mission church or add something to its decorations. "We have a chapel here twenty-five feet wide and nearly sixty feet long," writes Father Chauchetière. "We have three bells, with which we produce a very agreeable chime, and the Indians are about to give another, to complete the harmony."

When Father Bruyas assumed control of the mission one of his first duties was to bless a new bell, weighing eighty-one pounds, which had been purchased by the Sodality of the Holy Family. It was placed in the steeple of the church in the summer of 1682, and rendered good service daily in calling in the Indian farmers to the religious

services. The *Relation* takes the trouble to inform us that the bell already there was too small and could not be heard by those working in the fields far from the mission.

Claude Chauchetière, whose simple narrative shows that he was impressed by the activity he witnessed around him, gives interesting details about the little mission of St. Francis Xavier and about the daily life led there by the missionaries and their flock. "In the morning",<sup>1</sup> he writes, "we ring the bell at four o'clock, our ordinary hour for rising. Many of our Indians go immediately to the church to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, and they remain there until the first Mass, which in summer is said at five o'clock and in winter at a quarter to seven. The whole village is present every day during the second Mass, which is said for the Indians. The third Mass is said for the children, who all pray together, after which I give them a lesson in catechism. From eight o'clock until eleven, which is our dinner-hour, I am occupied in writing for their instruction or in visiting their cabins. There are sixty cabins, with at least two families in each, who need to be visited quite often, as well to urge them to the practice of virtue as to prepare newcomers among them for the sacraments. My work is made easy in this way: I sketch upon paper the truths of the Gospel and the practices

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les J.J. et la N. France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, III, p. 382.

invented by Monsieur de Nobletz.<sup>1</sup> Another book contains coloured pictures of the ceremonies of the Mass applied to the Passion of Our Lord; another contains pictures of the torments of Hell. Those books are mute teachers, and the Indians read them with pleasure and profit. At eleven o'clock the bell is rung for the *Angelus*, which they recite with great devotion. The afternoon is spent in giving instruction in the cabins. Some of this work is undertaken by a catechist, known as the *dogique*, whose office it is to look after the things of God, who oversees behaviour in church, leads in the recitation of the beads, recites public prayers and directs the singing. In this work he is aided by an official known as the *captain*. These two officers are usually named at an assembly of the men; and once they are appointed, they are loyally obeyed. They keep in close touch with the missionaries and receive their orders from them.”<sup>2</sup>

In these exercises, it is easily surmised, the church was the centre of attraction and the meeting-place of all the inhabitants of the little village. “The Indians came frequently during the day to visit the Blessed Sacrament, when they started

1. Don Michel de Nobletz was a zealous missionary in Brittany in the fifteenth century. In order to give greater efficacy to his eloquence during his missions he employed a system of tableaux, forty in number, depicting the commandments, the life of Christ, the virtues and vices of humanity, etc., which he displayed before his hearers, at the same time commenting and explaining the symbolism. It is said that other preachers, catechists, etc., following his example, used this method of imparting religious instruction so successfully that it became popular in France.—*Revue Pratique d'Apolo-gétique*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 319.

2. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LX, pp. 277-285.



for the fields and when they returned." From morning till night they could be seen wending their way to and from the rather imposing building, the largest in the village, making their visits or answering the bells calling them to prayer and to the worship of God. The dismay, then, of this pious Indian congregation can be easily surmised when, at midnight, on August 20, 1683, a furious gale, accompanied by thunder and lightning, "the worst that had ever been known in Canada," affirms the *Relation*, completely levelled their beloved church to the ground. Chauchetière tells us that two missionaries—evidently Vincent Bigot, a recent arrival, and himself—were asleep in their rooms in the rear of the building when it began to tumble down about them. They were saved by a sort of miracle, the beams above their heads being prevented by the joists from falling and crushing them to death. One escaped with a slight wound on his face; the other's shoulder was dislocated. The third, undoubtedly Father Bruyas, who was sleeping in a cabin close to the church, was aroused by the noise of the falling timbers. He ran to ring the alarm, but the rope was dragged from his hands, and the two bells in the little steeple fell at his feet, leaving him uninjured.

All three Jesuits attributed their escape to the saintly Kateri Tekakwitha, who had been only three years dead and whose memory was still held in benediction. When they compared notes after the accident, they had to record a remark-



able coincidence. One of them had said Mass that day in honor of Kateri; the second had visited her grave to ask for a special favor; the third, having had a presentiment for over a year that some misfortune was going to happen to the mission, went every day to pray at Kateri's grave, and during all that time, without knowing why he did so, had not ceased to urge the superior to transfer her precious remains to the church.

The converts were inconsolable at the extent of their misfortune.<sup>1</sup> They attributed the loss of their church to their sins, and in their humility they exclaimed that they did not deserve a better fate. They wasted no time, however, in vain lamentations. The Great Mohawk generously offered Father Bruyas for use as a temporary chapel the large cabin he had recently built for himself. Although the season was advanced and the corn harvest ready for the sickle, the Indians began at once to prepare for the rebuilding of their temple. The *Relation* tells us that happily there was an architect present—evidently one of the Jesuits—who had designed five chapels for other Indian villages, and plans were then drawn in order that they might begin to rebuild the following spring. Some wood was saved from the wreck of the old church, but a great deal more was needed, possibly with a view to enlargement.

All through the winter of 1683-84 the Indians cut down trees and squared them in the forest. Their task was an arduous one, and on account

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 229.

of the early coming of spring, they met with unexpected obstacles. "It was our plan," wrote Chauchetière, "to draw the logs over the snow and thus transfer all the pieces to the spot where the building was to be erected, but the workmen were disappointed when the snow began to melt sooner than they had expected. We did not know what to do; and could not make up our minds to put off the building for another year. During the months of March and April the men of the village had to go away on the hunt, leaving only women and children behind them, but the women bravely undertook the transportation of the clumsy posts and beams—for one may imagine," continues our chronicler, "that the timbers destined for a building sixty feet long and twenty-five wide are not light." At first, the brave Indian women thought of dragging them nearly a mile and a half overland; they had even begun to fell saplings to repair the road and thus make the passage easy, but the snow again failed them and their labour was lost.

They had now only one last opportunity offered by the spring break-up, for the ice in the Portage was melting and was moving slowly into the St. Lawrence. They therefore decided to throw the long, cumbersome logs into the little stream and let them float down with the ice to the village. In this arduous work the women exposed themselves to the danger of freezing or of drowning. Animated, however, with a burning desire of seeing their church rebuilt, they spared no sacrifice.

Old women and little girls carried the light pieces of timber over the road, but the young and strong, and those who were not otherwise incapacitated, followed the stream with poles and guided the logs through the cakes of broken ice. When any of the heavy pieces were stopped, the more vigorous women entered the cold water up to their waists to set the timbers free again. Those women, in the Indian tongue, were called the good Christians, for in a spirit of penance they had chosen the most difficult part of the labour, many of them thereby injuring their health. Naturally the heaviest part of the task was the drawing of the logs out of the water once they had reached their destination; but as the whole enterprise was undertaken in a spirit of faith and self-sacrifice everyone was happy. In the recital of these details the *Relation* has been followed closely, not for the intrinsic interest which they possess, but to show the fervour that animated the Christian Indians of Kahnawaké. The need of a church, where they all could assemble and pray, was keenly felt, and they did their utmost to hasten its completion. The good converts considered no sacrifice too great when the honour and glory of God was at stake.

The work of rebuilding was begun in the spring of 1684, and was completed, in the following autumn, only under the greatest difficulties. St. Francis Xavier's was feeling the pinch of poverty for reasons which must excite admiration for the charity of its native population. "It is customary with these peoples, even with the unbelievers,"

wrote Paul Ragueneau in the *Relation* of 1650, "that when refugees seek cover among strangers, their hosts distribute them among the different cabins. They give them not only lodging but food as well, with a charity which has nothing of the Indian in it, and which would put to shame people who have been born in Christianity. I have very often seen this hospitality practised among the Hurons, when seven or eight hundred fugitives would find, from the moment they arrived, benevolent entertainers who stretched out their arms to them and joyfully came to their assistance."<sup>1</sup> A similar spirit reigned at Kahnawaké. The fame of the mission had travelled so far that curiosity had drawn thither many transient strangers, pagan Iroquois for the most part, who fished and hunted in the neighbourhood. Those importunate visitors never failed to spend a few days in the village, consuming meanwhile or carrying off provisions which the Christians needed for themselves. Sometimes the passage in a season of three or four hundred of those unwelcome guests left the mission quite destitute.

Meanwhile the good will of the civil authorities had been enlisted in the misfortune which had overtaken the Indian village. Little sympathy might have been expected from Count Frontenac; but this official had been recalled to France in 1682, and a letter has come down to us, written by his successor, Governor de la Barre,<sup>2</sup>

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. XXXV, p. 207.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 209.



to the Marquis de Seignelay, Minister of the Colonies, asking help from King Louis XIV to replace what he considered "one of the prettiest edifices in the neighbourhood of Montreal." "The Jesuit Fathers," he wrote, "belonging to the mission of Sault St. Louis, bordering on Laprairie, who have provided the king with two hundred good Iroquois soldiers, have met with a terrible accident, their church having been demolished from top to bottom by a windstorm. A charitable gift from His Majesty would be well employed in repairing the damage done, and would maintain this mission, which is a very important one." Whether or not the King of France acted on this occasion with his usual generosity we have no means of knowing, but the letter of de la Barre is evidence that in his relations with the Jesuits the new governor was animated with sentiments quite different from those of his predecessor.

Frontenac's opposition had been the greatest obstacle to the advancement of the mission. Father Chauchetière tells us that the haughty governor would have been glad had there been no mission at the Sault at all. Not merely did he refuse to grant the Jesuits any title to their lands until he was forced to do so, but he tried to intimidate them by threats and expostulations. Had it not been for Father Fremin's visit to France they would probably have had to abandon Kahnawaké and return to Laprairie. This, observed Chauchetière, would have been a misfortune, for, even though separated, as they were,



by several miles from their white neighbours, the evil influence of these white neighbours was still felt.<sup>1</sup> Weak-willed Indians could not resist the temptation of indulging in liquor at the tavern which, with the connivance of Frontenac, had been established at Laprairie after their departure.

And yet, notwithstanding his opposition to the missionaries in the work of their ministry, Frontenac must be credited with much of the prosperity which the colony was enjoying. He was the only governor who, so far, had been successful in negotiating with the Iroquois, not merely because his imperious demeanour cowed them into submission, but also because he knew how to make the most of the peace which De Tracy had bequeathed to the colony and which was still being observed after a fashion. At bottom it was only a nominal peace; embers of bickering and strife still smouldered, ready to break into flame at any moment, for while the converts had been completely won over to the religion of the French, a fact which the Government loyally admitted was due to missionary influence, the policy which aimed at gaining the religious adhesion of the rest of the Iroquois in the cantons, and their beaver-skins at the same time, had not been so successful. The English living along the Hudson river valued the fur trade just as highly as did the French, and to hold it, they had no scruples in stirring up trouble between the French and the Iroquois when it suited their purpose. It was

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 193.



KATERI TEKAKWITHA

*Facsimile of an oil painting made, in 1681, by Claude Chauchetière, S.J.*



as much in the interests of the French at Quebec as in the interests of the English at Albany to keep peace with the powerful Iroquois Confederacy.<sup>1</sup> Peace were preferable from every point of view, but there was always the danger of indiscretion on either side. In the summer of 1684, Louis XIV asked James II to come to some definite understanding on the matter, and to issue instructions to his representative, the Governor of New York, not to take sides against the French or to aid the Indians in any way, but rather to act in concert with the governor of New France in all that would be for the common weal.

Thomas Dongan, who, in 1682, had been appointed governor by the Duke of York, was not over-zealous in carrying out the instructions of his royal master, for the probable reason that he was on the spot, and was a witness of the efforts the French were making, on their side, to win the Iroquois. Above all, Dongan dreaded French missionary influence, especially that which came from St. Francis Xavier's at Kahnawaké, owing to the constant communication which the converts had with the cantons. For while the governor of New York was a Catholic, with a Catholic chaplain in his household, and while he did not object to the doctrines which the Jesuits preached to the Indians, he objected, as governor of an English colony, to one of the results of their preaching, namely, the migration of the converts to Canada, where they were lost to English interests.

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les JJ. et la N. France au XVII siècle*, III, p. 218.

Dongan's correspondence with Father Jean de Lamberville, missionary in the cantons, as well as the letters he wrote to the French governor, showed how keenly he took the matter to heart; in fact, he applied to England for English-speaking Jesuits to replace their French brethren among the Iroquois. Dongan would undoubtedly have protected the French missionaries were they in any personal danger. In a letter to the French governor, in 1686, he wrote: "I shall take all imaginable care that the Fathers who preach the holy Gospell, over whom I have power, bee not in the least ill-treated, and upon that very account have sent for one of each nation to come to see me, and thus those beastly crimes you reprove shall be checked severely."<sup>1</sup> Dongan was as good as his word, for Claude Dablon, Superior of the Canadian Jesuits, wrote to thank him for what he had done for his brethren in the cantons. "I have learned by the letters of the two Fathers de Lamberville," declared Dablon, "the kindness you have had for them and the protection you afford them in their difficult position . . . . I am already aware that your protection extends even to the trouble of saving them from the thousand insults to which they are exposed, especially during the drunken debauches which constitute one of their severest trials. In a word, they have informed me, that you spare no pains to secure for them the repose necessary for the exercise of their

1. *Documentary History of New York*, Vol. I, p. 130.



functions, furnishing them also the means to send many souls to Paradise." <sup>1</sup>

Dongan willingly permitted Catholic doctrine to be preached to the Indians in the cantons; he had a high esteem for those who preached it, and watched over their interests; but while he belonged to their faith, he could not forget that he was governor of an English province, and when there was question of protecting French fur trade, he did not see why he should show any zeal. When, therefore, the relentless Senecas swooped down on the Illinois and the Miamis, allies of the French, pillaging seven hundred canoes, killing three or four hundred persons and taking nine hundred prisoners; and when, on another occasion, they attacked fourteen Frenchmen on their way to the Illinois country, seizing merchandise worth sixteen hundred livres, Dongan affected a benevolent neutrality. <sup>2</sup>

Governor de la Barre was well aware of the real sentiments of this English official, and knew that it would be useless to appeal to the instructions he had received from his king; but the hostile deeds committed in the West, which were nothing less than acts of war against the French, could not be allowed to go unpunished. Fearing, however, that the success of the Seneca raid would have an evil effect of the rest of the Confederacy, De la Barre resolved to send Father Jacques Bruyas, with a deputation, to the four other

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, p. 454.

2. FERLAND: *Histoire du Canada*, Vol. I, p. 135.

Iroquois cantons, to urge them to neutrality should he decide to take up arms against the offending tribe. Not without some hearty misgivings as to his success, the superior of Kahnawaké chose seven trusty Iroquois to accompany him. Laden with presents for the chiefs of the various villages, two went to the Mohawks, two to the Oneidas, and three to the Onondagas, with instructions to notify those nations that the French fully intended to observe the peace treaty of 1666, and to request them to do the same during the war which the French governor was about to declare against the Senecas.

It was undoubtedly De la Barre's inexperience, or his lack of judgment, that dragged him into the turmoil of war. He should have known that the English would like nothing better than to see the French in trouble with the Iroquois; in fact, history recalls the interesting detail that, while the envoys from Kahnawaké were interviewing the chiefs of the cantons, Dongan's agents were busy raising the British standard in the various Indian villages. Father Bruyas, whose intimate knowledge of those Indians, acquired during twelve years of residence amongst them, gave him a right to be heard, must have advised De la Barre not to undertake an expedition against them; but apparently this impulsive governor did not listen, for without waiting for the report of the seven envoys from Kahnawaké, and ignoring the advice of his council in Quebec, he formally declared war on the Senecas for the outrages they had

committed against the Western allies of the French.

The rupture of the peace of 1666 was the beginning of a series of disasters for the Canadian colony, but it showed at least how thoroughly the Christian faith had permeated the Iroquois of the mission of St. Francis Xavier, and how devoted were the Indian converts to the French cause when they decided to take up arms against their own Seneca brethren. This decision, however, was not made without due deliberation, for the situation was a delicate one. The question of participation in the coming campaign was discussed by the converts in their village councils at Kahnawaké, during which they saw that three modes of action were open to them: first, they were free to go back and live in their own country, but this plan was rejected immediately, as withdrawing from St. Francis Xavier's meant practically giving up their faith; secondly, they could stay at home and remain neutral, but if they adopted this plan, the French would never after trust their loyalty. A third proposal pleased them best of all. Having adopted the religion of the French, it was good politics to espouse the interests of the French and to participate in their battles. The warriors of Kahnawaké accordingly resolved to accompany the governor on his expedition against the offending nation.

Meanwhile De la Barre's declaration of war was exciting apprehension among the wiser heads in New France. While the crime committed in the West by the ferocious Senecas was a serious

one, and endangered the honour of French arms, still the military strength of the colony at the moment was not great enough to mete out the punishment which those Indians so richly deserved. Perhaps the governor counted too much on the success of the deputation he had sent out from Kahnawaké, although Father Jean de Lamberville,<sup>1</sup> then living in the cantons, had repeatedly warned him, in correspondence still extant, that attacking the Iroquois was a dangerous game, that the Confederacy would be faithful to its covenant, and that he could not hope to wage war against one of the cantons without getting into trouble with the others. Besides, the same missionary informed him that the Senecas were willing to make reparation and were even ready to send their delegates to Quebec, fully authorized to accept any proposals the French governor would dictate. Scouting all this wise advice, De la Barre immediately proceeded with his campaign. On the very day following that memorable day in 1684 on which he quitted Quebec, his intendant, Sieur de Meulles, harshly criticized this ill-advised measure of retaliation, in a letter to the Marquis de Seignelay at Versailles. "I shall finish this letter, my Lord," he wrote, "by telling you that the general left yesterday, the tenth of July, with a detachment of two hundred men. He

1. Jean de Lamberville, a native of Rouen, was born in 1633, entered the Jesuits in 1656 and came to Canada in 1669. The influence he wielded among the Iroquois has been commented on by historians. The Marquis de Denonville declared him to be "an intelligent man, very clever in dealing with the Indians". His Indian name was *Teiorhensere*.



has undertaken this war without consulting anyone in the country except the fur merchants."

On his way up the St. Lawrence, De la Barre was joined by the warriors of Kaknawaké and proceeded on his difficult journey, in the heat of summer, poorly provisioned, until he reached Famine cove, the point on the south shore of Lake Ontario from which the invasion of the enemy's country was to begin. In conformity with De Lamberville's advice, the cantons had sent fourteen delegates there to meet him, with Dekanissorens, Hasskouan, Oureouaté and Garakontie, a famous Onondaga chief, at their head, to discuss matters of reparation. But when those shrewd observers saw the pitiable state of the French soldiers, weakened as they were by disease and fatigue, they immediately turned the tables and started in dictating their own terms. They promised to make restitution for the damage they had done to the French among the Illinois and Miamis, but they refused to give any pledge of peace, and threatened to continue their war against those Western tribes. They then insolently ordered De la Barre and his motley troops to return whence they came. The French governor quietly submitted to the humiliating conditions imposed by the red men and sailed down the St. Lawrence. His management of the whole expedition and his disastrous failure created so much dissatisfaction in France that Louis XIV immediately recalled him.



Notwithstanding the decision of the village council to fight in the French ranks, the rôle the converts of Kahnawaké played in this sinister expedition gave Father Bruyas and his fellow-missionaries cause for serious reflection. It was the first time the Christian Iroquois had been called upon to take sides for or against their pagan brethren, and the question which loomed up was what effect their action would have on the cantons. While the Jesuits were satisfied with the example of loyalty to France their warriors had given, even to the crushing of the ties of flesh and blood, they feared for the results on religion, and they dreaded the alienation of the Indians who were still pagan. They were well aware that if Dongan wished to stir up bad blood amongst them, he could find plenty of motives in the campaign undertaken by the French against the Senecas, and especially in the help offered by the converts of Kaknawaké. The Christian Indians had laid themselves open to reprisals. There was now the probability of hostile visits from the cantons, and in order to be prepared for emergencies of this nature, they resolved to strengthen the defences of their mission. The building of the palisade, which had been begun around their village, and which they had carried on in a desultory way, was undertaken in earnest after a visit by Chevalier de Callière in 1685. "Put your fort in a state to receive the enemy," said the Governor of Montreal. "I will send you good cannon to defend your bastions. I look upon you as the guardians of the French

colony.”<sup>1</sup> Fort Kahnawaké was only completed in 1685. It was pentagonal in shape, with a bastion at each corner, on one of which a great iron cannon was placed, capable of destroying any approaching enemy with eight-pound balls.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the missionaries did not neglect other means of protection. They encouraged the dusky members of their flock to solicit the intercession of their saintly Iroquois sister, Kateri Tekakwitha, who had lived and died amongst them in the odour of sanctity, and who would undoubtedly plead for them before the throne of the Almighty. This advice was heeded, for near the end of the year 1684, Chauchetière wrote: “We have not had a more perilous year for the mission than the present one. Many persons came to seek the intercession of Kateri Tekakwitha, and so great has been the devotion shown to her that the missionaries believed they were but paying a just tribute to her virtue when they removed her remains from the cemetery, where a little monument had been raised in her honour the previous year, and placed them in the new church. The removal was accomplished during the night, in the presence of the most devout of the village, who began to kneel and pray at her tomb.”

The Indians had completed this pious task, and were busy with their fortifications, when they received the visit of Monsignor de Saint-

1. BURTIN: *Notes*, p. 167-168.

2. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIII, p. 245.

Vallier. This prelate, who later on became the second Bishop of Quebec, following the example set by his saintly predecessor Bishop Laval, crossed over to the foot of the rapid on September 21, 1685, and spent a day with the converts, whose village had a population of nearly seven hundred souls dwelling in sixty-seven cabins. "Although there were few at home," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "owing to the departure of the young men on their autumn hunting expeditions, the piety which I witnessed far surpassed all that I had hoped to see. I advanced the hour of the church service in order to have the consolation of giving them benediction of the Blessed Sacrament myself, as is my custom in visiting those missions. Before I took leave of them, the captains who had not yet gone on the hunt invited me into a cabin where one of their chiefs, who was at the same time the oldest convert, addressed me immediately, and told me that their joy would have been complete had I come at a time when they could have rendered me all the honours which, it seemed to them, I in my humility was trying to avoid; that the king in his goodness had made them a great gift by sending them from so far a prelate so good and so sympathetic; that they would be eternally grateful to me if, through my intercession, they obtained from His Majesty still greater protection by removing the obstacles which might hinder them from being perfect Christians. In reply, I

1. *Mgr. Saint-Vallier*, Quebec 1882, p. 55. For other testimony see *Mgr. Saint-Vallier's État présent de l'Église*, etc., Quebec 1856, pp. 49-66.

told them that I had true sentiments of esteem and tenderness for them, and that I would be always at their service, chiefly in matters regarding their advancement in religion. I assured them that they could give no greater pleasure to the king than to count on his royal piety and on his sovereign authority to strengthen the faith in them and to promote good order."

## CHAPTER III

### Kahnawaké and Kahnawakon

1685-1690

*De Denonville and the Jesuits—Converts accompany the Governor against the Senecas—Seizure of the Seneca Chiefs—Kondiaronk—Massacre of Lachine. Selection of a New Site—Chauchetière's Tribute to Kateri—The Schenectady Tragedy—Death of Adhasatah, the Great Mohawk—Hostile Invasions. The Battle of Laprairie—Attitude of the Converts. Ill-will of Frontenac and Testimony of Charlevoix.*

THE Marquis de Denonville, an officer in the king's dragoons, was appointed to succeed Sieur de la Barre as Governor of New France. He arrived in 1685 with an elaborate programme, outlined by Louis XIV, of what he was expected to do for the colony. He was instructed to continue the work of civilizing the Indian tribes and to urge upon them the adoption of European ways and customs as the best means of keeping them attached to the French; he was to encourage peaceful relations with the Governor of New York; and he was to force peace upon the pagan Iroquois, who still gloried in their savage independence, even though it were necessary to wage war against them. The new governor began at once to execute



the royal programme, but his task was not an easy one. His correspondence with the Home government, during the year after his arrival, revealed a distressing state of affairs. Serious abuses had crept into the colony. Certain elements among the white population were giving the civil authorities more trouble than the Indians. The conduct of many young Frenchmen, especially those engaged in fur hunting, were far from edifying; forest life had so strong an attraction for them that many of them had even adopted savage ways. Their dissolute example was fatal to the pagan Indians, who, far from being instructed in religion and encouraged to lead Christian lives, were acquiring the vices of the white men. Taken all together, the conditions with which De Denonville had to contend were not encouraging; however, he was greatly edified by the conduct of the Indian converts he had seen living at Sillery, Lorette and Kahnawaké. The examples of Christian virtue which had met his eyes in those missions convinced him that the only way to civilize the Indians was to keep them by themselves in villages planted here and there in the colony. By carrying out this plan, not merely would the Indians have greater facilities for practising their religion, but the ties of blood being strong in them, their presence among the French would restrain their pagan brethren from accepting from the English any invitation to carry war into Canada. This motive was not without some foundation, for Monsignor de Saint-Vallier in-

forms us that "the Mohawks had many relatives at Sault St. Louis, and they declared they would take no part in the war against the French until they had withdrawn their children and friends from among them." This meant, in final analysis, that there was little danger of hostility from the cantons as long as Kahnawaké could be used as a shield and a peace preserver between the two colonies.

Relying on the wisdom and the experience of the Jesuits, who encouraged the migration of the Indians into Canada, and having under their eyes an example of the success that had been attained, both the prelate and the governor were enthusiastically advocating a continuance of the system, just at the time Colonel Dongan, Governor of New York, was denouncing it and renewing his efforts to alienate the Iroquois from the French. The constant drain of converts from the cantons had at last aroused the English governor to action, and he went to work more strenuously than ever to neutralize the influence which the mission of Kahnawaké was exercising throughout the Mohawk country. In a speech to the Five Nations he boldly asserted that he was going to recall the Christian Mohawks from that mission. "I will give them lands where they will live with English Jesuits whom I shall provide," he said. "There will be English Jesuits in the whole Iroquois country . . . . Let those," he added, referring to the French Jesuits, "who are now living among them go and live somewhere else or return whence they

came." At a subsequent meeting of the Five Nations he forbade the Iroquois to go near Fort Cataraqui or to have any relations with the French, and he again renewed his promise to supply the tribes with English Jesuits for their spiritual needs.

There is no record to show that Dongan succeeded in turning one convert away from Kahnawaké; on the contrary, his campaign helped the mission to augment in numbers. The Great Mohawk had offered De Denonville to carry to his canton the peaceful message of the King of France. His offer was accepted, and while paddling down Lake Champlain he met sixty of his Mohawk countrymen who had been sent by the English governor to capture prisoners. He called on them to halt and, in an eloquent speech, so completely changed their warlike temper that they resolved to return home. Always an apostle as well as a warrior, Athasata persuaded four of those bloodthirsty Mohawks to accompany him back to the mission to be instructed in the Christian faith.

Meanwhile La Plaque, his nephew, carried the king's message to the Oneidas and the Onondagas, and Dongan was again outwitted in his plans. But he had some success in other and unsuspected quarters. His active co-operation with the English merchants had brought a great deal of the French fur trade to Albany, and his generosity in prices gained over a number of young French fur hunters who deserted Canada to live and trade entirely

with the English. Dongan stopped at nothing but open rupture with the French. He caused the news to be spread throughout the cantons that De Denonville, the new French governor, was determined to declare war against them, and urged them to pillage both the French and their Indian allies wherever they met them. Spurred by these sinister counsels, the pagan Iroquois grew more haughty and warlike than they were, even after the humiliating defeat of de la Barre. The treacherous Senecas started out again on the warpath, this time in real earnest; they began their raids on French territory, with the usual accompaniment of scalping and murder. In the West they wreaked their cruelty on two hundred women and children of the Miami nation, an ally of the French. The Senecas had dug up the tomahawk, and they made no secret of the fact that they were thirsting for blood, French or Indian.

Governor de Denonville took ample time to study the situation. He carefully followed the trend of events in the Iroquois country, of which he was kept fully informed by De Lamberville and the other Jesuit missionaries, and after mature deliberation he was convinced that the French could never make friends of the pagan Iroquois, and that he would have to follow de Tracy and Frontenac in their policy of waging war. A bold stroke against the offending Senecas was the only alternative if he wished to put an end to their murderous raiding. This, however, could not be





SITE OF ANCIENT KAHNAWAKON, SHOWING (x) THE GRIST-MILL





done in a hurry; preparations must first be made. It was only in 1687, two years after his arrival, that he was able to undertake an expedition against that bloodthirsty nation.

The eight hundred soldiers who had been recently sent to him from France were left to guard the white settlements along the St. Lawrence, and with a body of two thousand five hundred men, made up of French regulars, colonial militia and Indians, he started up the river. The warriors of Kahnawaké, numbering about a hundred, under the leadership of Athasata, the Great Mohawk, came to swell the motley army, when the order was given to advance. "Never before," wrote M. Belmont, "and probably never again will such a spectacle be seen: an army on the march made up one quarter of regular troops; a quarter of inhabitants, in four battalions, led by the *noblesse* of the colony; another quarter comprising Christian Indians; the rest a conglomeration of the barbarous nations, their bodies naked and painted in all sorts of figures, some wearing horns on their heads, others carrying behind them tails armed with arrows. What with dancing and singing and shouting in a dozen different languages, the nights were turned into a pandemonium."<sup>1</sup>

Such were the elements of De Denonville's army. Father Bruyas accompanied the warriors of his village as chaplain, a position which, under the circumstances, threatened to be rather compromising for the superior of St. Francis Xavier's.

1. BELMONT: *Histoire du Canada*, p. 21.

If this prudent and zealous man had received any inkling beforehand of the act of treachery, an act unparalleled in Canadian history, which the governor was contemplating, it is quite certain that he would have absolutely declined such a journey to the seat of war.

In 1686, De Denonville invited Father Jean de Lamberville, the Onondaga missionary, to Quebec, to discuss the situation, and it was decided by both these men that it would be well to convene the chiefs of the Iroquois villages at Fort Cataraqui in the following summer. Acting in the utmost good faith, therefore, the missionary, after his return to the cantons, began to carry out the wishes of the French governor. A letter, which he wrote five years later, explained the part he had taken in the incidents of 1687. "I gathered together forty of the Iroquois chiefs," he wrote, "and gave them the word of the governor that, being a Christian and chosen by the king to be his lieutenant-general in this country, they should believe him to be incapable of failing to keep his word or to act against the law of nations. When they heard what I said, they consented to my wishes, and faithfully promised to be at Cataraqui at the time appointed. When De Denonville was nearing the fort with his troops, the Indian delegates were also seen approaching in their bark canoes laden with furs as presents and pledges for the French."<sup>1</sup> And yet these forty unsuspecting chiefs—among them the Cayuga Oureou-

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les J.J. et la N. France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, III, p. 187.

haré, who more than anyone had helped de Lamberville to gather them together—were hardly ashore when they were seized, bound, taken to Quebec, and sent across the ocean to France, where, according to royal instructions, “being strong and robust,” they were condemned to work as galley-slaves.

Meanwhile De Denonville continued his expedition. As soon as his expected reinforcements had arrived from Michillimakinac and other western points, he penetrated the Iroquois country, by way of the Genesee river, to attack the Senecas. But those wily savages were not caught napping. Scouts had gone ahead carrying news of the treachery of the French governor, and, in their rage, the Senecas determined to make a stand. Eight hundred faced the French, and in the battle which took place they lost forty-five killed and sixty wounded. The warriors of Kahnawaké distinguished themselves under the Great Mohawk. “Our Christian Indians,” wrote De Denonville to de Seignelay, “surpassed all and performed deeds of valour, especially the Iroquois, upon whom we dared not rely to fight against their relatives.”<sup>1</sup> But the crafty Senecas, realizing that they were hopelessly outnumbered and that they could retaliate some other time, hid their supplies, burned their main village, and retired into the depths of the forest with their women and children. Further advance on the part of the French seemed so useless that after having spent ten days in the

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 338.

cantons and having burned four villages, De Denonville withdrew his forces to Lake Ontario and sailed down the St. Lawrence. The greatest loss the Indians of Kahnawaké had to deplore in the campaign was that of Hot Powder, who fell under the balls of the Senecas. This Oneida chief, who had taken part in the murder of the Jesuits in the Huron country, in 1649, attributed his conversion to the prayers of his victims. He atoned for his crime so well that, Charlevoix informs us, "few missionaries succeeded better in gaining over pagans to Christianity."<sup>1</sup>

While not so humiliating as the attempt of De la Barre, this expedition was also a tragic failure. De Denonville had done no damage to the Senecas which they could not easily repair. It was his treachery at Cataraqui that had not merely incensed the rest of the Confederacy, but had given a serious blow to the prestige of the French and to the Christian religion in the cantons and in the colony. His shameless breach of faith, so repugnant to the red men's sense of justice, excited the fury of the Iroquois and put the lives of the missionaries then living in the other cantons in imminent danger. The Jesuit, Jean de Lamberville, the unwitting instrument of De Denonville's double-dealing, was aided by Garakontie to escape from the Onondagas;<sup>2</sup> but Pierre Milet, who was

1. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 516.

2. "There is no doubt," wrote Charlevoix (*Hist. de la Nouv. France*, Vol. II, p. 511, "that Garakontie helped the missionary to escape unharmed. The great Onondaga chief was deeply attached to Father de Lamberville, and the esteem in which the latter held him ever afterwards showed that he looked upon him as his liberator."



labouring among the Oneidas, was seized and tortured, and would have been put to death had he not been adopted by a family with which he remained a prisoner for seven years. "It is hard to understand," writes Ferland, "that honourable men like the governor and the intendant could have consented to an act so little in conformity with justice. The Iroquois showed their perfidy on many occasions, but it was not fitting that France should imitate those barbarians, or that a Christian people should adopt a code so opposed to the precepts of Christianity." Other writers, Charlevoix among them, held a similar view. Had the Indians, who were seized and sent overseas, been merely prisoners of war, they would have had little sympathy in their plight. Those exiles did not suffer more in the galleys of France than hundreds of Frenchmen had already suffered at their hands in cruel captivity or by fire at the stake.<sup>1</sup> But they were delegates who had come, representing their nations, to treat of matters which in their eyes were of very grave importance, and their Indian code of honour stigmatized as odious this act of the highest official of France in America.<sup>2</sup>

1. CHARLEVOIX: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. I, p. 509.

2. Perhaps historians have been too severe on the Marquis de Denonville who was simply carrying out instructions he received from France, among which may be found the following: "His Majesty approves the measures he has adopted for the approaching campaign, and has nothing to add except that, as he possibly may take several Iroquois prisoners in the course of this war, His Majesty desires him to keep them in confinement until an opportunity will offer to send them to France, as His Majesty thinks he can employ them in the galleys. He can send, even by the return of the vessels which will have carried over the soldiers, those whom he will have captured before the departure of those ships." *Docts. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 315.

The Iroquois were now all astir, and the English at Albany seized the opportunity to alienate them still further from the French. Dongan wrote to the governor at Quebec that one of the conditions of any future peace with the tribes would be the sending back to their villages of all the Iroquois living at Kahnawaké. Echoes of the treachery were heard in the village itself, and had unsuspected results. Agents hailing from the Mohawk valley paid secret visits to their relatives there, and began to undermine the allegiance of the converts themselves. The outcome was that a number of the latter renounced the Christian faith, quitted the village, and returned to their cantons in disgust.

De Denonville had now become less confident in mere force of arms and had recourse to parleying, as *Sieur de la Barre* had done before him. In the summer of 1688, he asked *Father Bruyas* to send some friendly Indians from the mission to the cantons to begin fresh negotiations. *Haaskouan*, an eminent Onondaga chief, who was reported to have "the strongest head and the loudest voice among the Iroquois," and who had been won over to the French by the kind offices of *de la Barre*, met them on their arrival. So eloquently did he plead their cause with his pagan brethren that it was decided to send a deputation to Quebec to discuss a declaration of neutrality. De Denonville's plan was on the point of succeeding; a new peace loomed on the horizon. *Haaskouan* and a number of envoys had started for Montreal,

and were on their way down the St. Lawrence, when they were met by Kondiaronk, a Huron chief, who hated both French and Iroquois and who boasted "that he would kill the intended peace." This Indian, whom Charlevoix calls "the most intrepid and the most remarkable the French ever met in Canada,"<sup>1</sup> was waiting for them in a cove. He and his companions fell on the envoys as they passed, killed some of them, and made prisoners of the rest. Feigning the utmost astonishment and regret when he learned that his victims were ambassadors on their way to discuss terms of peace with the French governor, the wily Huron took them into his confidence, and, in one of the most interesting pages of Canadian history, assured them that it was the French themselves who had sent him to commit this second act of treachery. To give weight to his words, Kondiaronk released all his prisoners except one, whom he took to Michillimackinac, and put to death. He then sent an old Iroquois prisoner home to tell his fellow-tribesmen that, while the French were amusing themselves in the cantons with insincere desires for peace, they were seizing them and shooting them in other parts of the colony.

Kondiaronk had succeeded only too well in his boast. He had killed the peace, and the French governor, foreseeing nothing now but murderous incursions, and knowing no better way to meet them than by some system of defence,

1. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*. Vol. I, p. 536.

suggested the erection of small forts in the neighbourhood of Montreal, places of refuge provided with palisades and redoubts, where the terror-stricken colonists could run for shelter at the approach of the ferocious enemy.

During the space of two years, ever since the seizure of their chiefs, the Iroquois had kept the French governor in uncertainty as to their intentions, for they neither accepted nor rejected his proposals of peace. In June, 1688, a deputation, under the leadership of Father de Lamber-ville, came to Montreal to discuss terms, one of the stipulations being the return of the prisoners still held at Fort Kahnawaké and the Mountain mission. Fully conscious of the blunder he made at Cataraqui, De Denonville had already written to France to obtain the release of the Iroquois chiefs from the galleys at Marseilles; but while these negotiations were in progress, twelve hundred Iroquois lay hidden along the shores of Lake St. Francis ready to swoop down upon the French. Short sudden raids, here and there, on the outskirts of the colony had kept the inhabitants on the alert. The village of Kahnawaké was in the danger zone. It had long been looked upon as an advanced post; its strategic value was recognized by the colonial authorities, and demands were made on the Court of France for funds to strengthen it. This work had been done four years before, but the palisade and bastions, completed in 1685, were no longer considered strong enough to withstand the onslaught of the pagan



hordes. Fearing a hostile attack early in the summer of 1689, De Denonville had the Christian converts and their families removed for safety's sake within the walls of Montreal, while the French soldiers spent six weeks transporting their corn across Laprairie bay.<sup>1</sup>

Men, women, and children were to remain among the whites until their fort had been strengthened or a new one built elsewhere. The transfer of the Indians to Montreal was not made a moment too soon, for almost immediately the enemy threw off the mask and began operations on a more tragic scale than ever. On the fifth of August, 1689, they swooped down on the little village of Lachine, butchered two hundred peaceful inhabitants and burned their homes. Had the Christians of Kahnawaké not been in Montreal, safely protected by the soldiery, they would probably have suffered the same fate.

In a letter to the Marquis de Seignelay, announcing the temporary transfer of the Indians, De Denonville paid a compliment to the converts and their missionaries. "Our Iroquois mission near La Prairie de la Magdelaine," he wrote, "which I have been obliged to transfer within the walls of Montreal, must be regarded as a haven which will in time contribute greatly to the conversion of the Iroquois, for found there are many of every nation who, it is hoped, will attract their relatives if care is taken of this mission, and if they are kept away from Montreal,

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 435.



where drunkenness will cause their destruction. They must be placed in a position in which they can easily defend themselves against the enemy, with strong redoubts, enclosed and flanked with palisades. The best spot appears to me to be between Chateaugay and their old village. I brought them to Montreal because I had learned that the enemy had decided to seize them. The fort in their present mission is in poor condition and is, for many reasons, beyond repair."

The mention of a new site shows that a second migration was in contemplation, and advantage was taken of the absence of the Indians in Montreal to bring the affair to a head. There were other reasons, besides fear of the enemy, for this important decision. Fourteen years had elapsed since the Indians had abandoned Laprairie, and during that period the intense cultivation of Indian corn had exhausted the soil around Kahnawaké. Famine, unless timely precautions were taken, was a danger as imminent as an onslaught from the Iroquois. Both dangers were causing the missionaries great anxiety. The moment had come to quit the foot of the rapid. The place fixed upon by De Denonville and the Jesuits was on the bank of the river, two miles further west, on land granted by the king in 1680. The soil was fresh and rich, and the site as a natural stronghold could hardly be surpassed, for owing to the wild, headlong course of the rapid at that point, no enemy could land, and the Indians would consequently have all the protection needed from

the riverside. The new village, called by the converts Kahnawakon—which means “in the rapid”—was begun probably in the winter of 1689-90 and completed early in the following summer.<sup>1</sup> The Indians, however, had not returned in July, 1690, for in a letter from Louis XIV to the governor, the king expressed the hope that he would send them back to their new village as soon as possible, and give them and their families every assistance and security, so that they might be willing to help in waging a vigorous war against the enemy.

After a year's seclusion in Montreal the Indians again crossed the bay and settled down in their new village, beside the swiftly flowing St. Lawrence, in greater security than had previously been their lot. Charlevoix informs us that it was high time they were sent back.<sup>2</sup> Owing to their intercourse with the whites and the lack of mission discipline during their stay in Montreal, they had lost much of their religious fervour, and they could be no longer recognized either for their morals or for their piety—so long the edification of New France—another proof for the Jesuits, confirming an experience of thirty years, that Count Frontenac's policy of assimilation was neither useful nor practical.

While these important changes were taking place, the leader of the Christian converts at

1. The old site, called by the Indians *Kahnawaké* (the rapid) was henceforth known as *Kateri tsi tkaïatal*, “the spot where Kateri was buried.”

2. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 98.

Kahnawakon was still Father Jacques Bruyas, who was completing his eighth year as superior, and who was to continue in the same office for three years more, when other and heavier responsibilities were to be thrust upon him.

Meanwhile he was busily engaged in bringing order out of the chaos which followed the migration from Montreal. Claude Chauchetière, who assisted him during those years, was also actively at work helping the converts to adapt themselves to new conditions. In 1694, when Chauchetière was transferred to the residence at Montreal, he took with him that tender veneration for Kateri Takakwitha which he had cultivated near her tomb. In a letter to one of his religious brethren in Bordeaux, dated from Montreal, in 1694, he begged the superior of the college to urge the young Jesuits in France to recite some prayers daily in her honour, giving as a motive the custom common in Canada among the French and Indians, who go to pray at the tomb of Kateri, when they wish to obtain some favour from God. "I began it on the very day of her burial," he wrote. "I have always believed it was she who saved me when our chapel was blown down by the storm. In the opinion of all, I miraculously escaped; and I believe that the virtuous maiden repaid me on that occasion for the services I rendered her during her last illness."

The names of other Jesuits, well known to historical students, are found in the records of the Kahnawakon mission during those strenuous

years. Trouble in the cantons, the inevitable aftermath of De Denonville's treachery, had rendered life unsafe for the missionaries there, and Jean and Jacques de Lamberville, Vincent Bigot, and the veteran, Julien Garnier, retired to Kahnawakon. Pierre Milet was still a prisoner among the Oneidas; Raffeix was in Quebec; Father Jean Morain, whose name appears on the register but who apparently only made a short stay at the mission, died at Quebec, in 1687; and Fremin, to whom St. Francis Xavier's owed so much during its period of formation, followed him to the grave in 1691.

The Lachine massacre, in August, 1689, completed the discouragement of De Denonville, and he welcomed a letter from the king, written in the previous May, telling him that as war had started in Europe, he was needed at home. This recall was really made for the purpose of putting at the head of the colony a man who had already occupied the position, and who, notwithstanding his faults and prejudices, had displayed wonderful energy of character in dealing with the native tribes. When Count Frontenac reached Quebec, in 1689, he brought back from the galleys the Cayuga, Oureouharé, who was probably the most prominent of the forty Iroquois chiefs who went to meet De Denonville at Fort Cataraqui. This man was held in high esteem by his tribe, and his seizure and transportation had incensed the Indians so deeply that it was one of the causes of the sanguinary excesses committed against the



colony. Frontenac, who did not hide his sentiments regarding De Denonville's conduct, endeavoured through his interpreter, Colin, to show Oureouharé every mark of kindness during the voyage back to Canada. He knew that his imprisonment in Europe would heighten the Cayuga's prestige among his tribesmen, and he sought to make him a friend, hoping thereby to secure his cooperation in the interests of peace. It was at the suggestion of Oureouharé himself that a message was sent to the cantons, notifying them of Frontenac's return and inviting them to welcome their ancient Father Ononthio, "whom they had so long missed, and to thank him for his goodness to them on his return in restoring to them a chief whom they supposed to have been irrevocably lost." <sup>1</sup>

The manœuvre accomplished nothing. The Iroquois were on the warpath at that time, and sentimental considerations had little weight with them. Canada was in the midst of alarms, and murderous raids were being carried out in the neighbourhood of Montreal. At Lachesnaye and Bout de l'Isle one hundred and fifty Indians attacked peaceful farmers in their homes, killing several of them and carrying others into captivity.

Affairs in the colony had now reached a serious crisis. The success of the Lachine massacre had emboldened the Iroquois, and had excited their contempt for the French, who apparently could not defend themselves. Letters from Michillimackinac arrived at Quebec to warn Frontenac

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 464.



that the Ottawa tribe, a French ally, was about to conclude a treaty of peace with the Senecas, This would very materially affect the Western fur trade, and would also be a serious blow to French prestige in the West. Frontenac thought he saw in this affair the hand of Sir Edmund Andros, the successor of Dongan, and he immediately decided to strike boldly, in various directions, against the English settlements, to pay them back in their own coin, while imparting a salutary fear of French strength.

The attack on Schenectady was his first attempt. Two hundred men, eighty of whom were Indians under the leadership of the Great Mohawk of Kahnawakon, left Montreal in the beginning of February, 1690, and after a journey of eight days, through snow and ice, reached the little village of Corlaer, as Schenectady was then called. When within two leagues of their goal, Chief Athasata harangued his warriors in true Indian fashion, telling them to forget the fatigues of their hard journey, and to avenge the bad treatment they had received from the pagan Iroquois and from the English. It was near midnight when the invaders silently entered the open and unguarded gates. Raising a blood-curdling war-whoop, they began to set the dwellings on fire. Unhappy inmates, half-clad men, women, and children, rushed out into the snow to avoid being burned to death, but they fell into the hands of the enemy. Sixty of them were massacred in cold blood.

Twenty-eight were made prisoners and were brought back to the colony.

At the same time similar invading parties left Quebec and Three Rivers, under the leadership of De Portneuf and Hertel de Rouville, invading Maine and New Hampshire, where they burned houses, barns, and cattle, killed many of the inhabitants and took fifty prisoners, chiefly women and children. Those dreadful encounters have made writers of a more peaceful age ask why a civilized and polished nation like France adopted such means to gain its ends, for it was undoubtedly regrettable that the French in Canada had to employ Indians to help them in their expeditions.

"What else could they do?" asks Ferland. "They were merely a handful of men in the face of the large populations of New England and New York. They had to defend their homes and their families against the Iroquois Confederacy. In 1689, they saw those allies of the English swoop down on the colony, burn their villages, profane their churches, destroy their crops, consign to the flames their women, children, and aged, carry the torch and tomahawk throughout the whole region of Montreal; and retire only after they had ruined a large part of the country and massacred a tenth of the white population of Canada. And who induced the Indians to undertake this war of extermination? Behind the Iroquois were the English colonial officials reckoning up the cost incurred in furnishing arms and provisions to the invading hordes of Iroquois." Even when the Five



SITE OF ANCIENT KANATAKWEKÉ—LA SUSANNE



Nations seemed tired of war, the same officials sent three deputies to persuade them not to make peace, not even to consent to an armistice, but to continue their depredations.

Naturally, those French raids, which were sanguinary as well as successful, intensified the hatred already existing between the French and the English colonies. While they helped to give the English a taste of their own medicine, their success had a chastening effect on the tribes allied to the French and put a stop to their wavering sympathies. The Indians learned that French strength was not yet exhausted, as the English had claimed, and that French good will was still worth cultivating.

In the spring of 1691, a fourth expedition, composed of French and Indians, left Montreal and proceeded in the direction of Lake Champlain, under the joint command of *Sieur le Gardeur de Beauvais* and *Athasata*, the Great Mohawk. They had reached the mouth of the Salmon river on the fourth of June, and were preparing to bivouac for the night, when they caught a glimpse of a number of Algonquins and Abenakis, belonging to the Mountain mission, who were off on an invasion similar to their own. The two parties failed to recognize each other as allies, and after a bloody skirmish the next morning at sunrise, the Great Mohawk was found among the slain. The death of this distinguished military leader created a profound impression in the colony. Since his conversion to Christianity he had played an important part in the Indian wars. He com-



manded the Indians in the expedition against the Senecas in 1687, and merited the praise of the French governor for his gallant conduct. "I cannot speak too highly of the assistance we receive from the Great Mohawk and his warriors of Sault St. Louis," De Denonville wrote to de Seignelay, Minister of Marine and Colonies. Four months before his untimely death, as we have just seen, he accompanied Iberville while making a successful raid on Schenectady. The English at Albany referred to him as the *Indian General*, and tried several times either to win him over or to take him prisoner, but he always eluded their snares. The chronicler of 1691 deplored the death of this great warrior and added that "his irreparable loss drew tears from the whole country." Although Athasata's name is less familiar than those of others, such as Garakontie, Kondiaronk, Theyendenaga and Tecumseh, it deserves a place in history beside the names of those famous native leaders.

The Great Mohawk had nobly served his Indian countrymen at Kahnawakon. Under the spell of his leadership, they became brave warriors and always gave a good account of themselves in the various encounters they had with the English. If later on they were to fall under the displeasure of Frontenac, on account of their lack of loyalty, for the present at least they enjoyed the confidence of the French officials. De Callière, Governor of Montreal, proposed to make good use of them if the programme he had drawn up in 1688, for the reduction of the English provinces, were ever

attempted.<sup>1</sup> In a speech delivered to them in 1691, as we learn from the testimony of an Iroquois spy who was listening and who afterwards reported it to the officials at Albany, De Callière said:

"Take courage, children, let us march against the Senecas and destroy them village by village. We have a thousand men from the far nations at Cataraqui. Let us make two hundred canoes and go thither with a thousand more men and fall upon them; first on the Senecas, then on the Cayugas, Onondagas and Oneidas, pass by the Mohawks, and so come down upon the Christians at Albany."

The Praying Indians, as the converts of Kahnawakon were called, asked him what he designed to do with New York and Boston. The Governor of Montreal replied: "As for New York we shall send ships to take it by sea, but as for Boston we regard it no more than a little barking dog that dare not bite."<sup>2</sup> De Callière revealed only part of the plan he had long been working on for the invasion of the English Provinces, but the mere fact that he took the Christian warriors into his confidence showed that he trusted their

1. De Callière's plan, worked out in detail and kept in view for at least two years, was to send an expedition consisting of two thousand regulars and militia down Lake Champlain and the Hudson, surprise Albany and New York, annihilate English power at one stroke, and thus secure the submission of the Iroquois who would be deprived of supplies and ammunition. This rather daring plan was to be carried out on the same lines as the other French raids into New England. All the Governor asked from the mother country were six hundred men and 75,000 livres; but the authorities in France defaulted owing to lack of means. "Louis XIV," writes Rameau (*La France aux Colonies*, Paris, 1859, p. 292), "was beginning to feel the straits into which his pride had plunged him, and it was impossible for him to supply men or money for points outside of France."

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, p. 783.

loyalty, and that he would employ them should his somewhat elaborate scheme ever materialize.

The news of the abandonment of Kahnawaké at the foot of the Lachine rapids, and the erection of a new fort at Kahnawakon, three miles further west, showed the English at Albany that the efforts they were making to alienate the converts were not meeting with much success. On the other hand, Kahnawakon was receiving no new recruits from the cantons. The Jesuits had practically discontinued their labours there after the De Denonville expedition, and the lack of missionary effort during the two following years had produced its inevitable results. This fact, however, did not prevent the pagan Iroquois along the Mohawk river from making surreptitious visits to their brethren at the new mission. The ties of flesh and blood were too strong to be broken by colonial governments. Neither Sir Edmund Andros nor Count Frontenac could raise barriers high enough to prevent the intercourse that was continually going on. The Iroquois in the cantons, although as daring and as haughty as ever, were constantly asserting that they were not ill-disposed towards their converted countrymen; they maintained that the French alone were the objects of their resentment. In 1691, eight hundred of those ferocious Indians were again roving in the neighbourhood of Montreal, spreading destruction among the farmers along the St. Lawrence, burning houses and barns, seizing and torturing prisoners. One hundred and forty men were encamped behind

the village of Kahnawakon. A couple of their influential chiefs were sent to tell the Christians at the mission that the invasion, then in full swing against the French, was not aimed at them. The pagan Iroquois had no quarrel with their own people, who were urgently invited to return to their cantons.

This invitation to abandon their village, which could be backed up by the eloquence of numbers if the Christians refused to acquiesce, might have been a covert threat from the enemy. It would have been sufficient to have sounded a few war-whoops in the hearing of the hundreds of pagan Indians operating in the neighborhood, for Kahnawakon to be in ruins. The danger was real, for, in spite of the proffered friendship, it was hard to fathom the depths of Indian duplicity. Happily, in those delicate circumstances, the converts did not falter; they refused the invitation to go back to their former homes. "Encouraged by their missionaries," wrote Intendant de Champigny to the Count de Pontchartrain, successor of de Seignelay, "and aided by reinforcements which M. de Callière had sent them, the Christians have remained faithful and declined the proposal. Our Indians answered that the governor must be consulted, and that meanwhile nothing should be undertaken on one side or the other."<sup>1</sup>

It would be needless to give further proof that, while the Indian converts were conscious of the blood that flowed in their veins, the Christian

1. *Docts. Colon, Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 542.



faith had weaned them from pagan customs and had drawn them to the French. The battle of Laprairie, which took place in the same year, found the warriors of Kahnawakon again beside the troops of the colony. As a sort of reprisal for the defeat of Sir William Phips in the Lower St. Lawrence, in 1690, Major Peter Schuyler descended Lake Champlain, in the following year, and with an army of English and Mohawks stealthily attacked the fort at Laprairie. De Callière had gathered together there seven or eight hundred men, among them a detachment of Hurons under Oureouharé, Frontenac's old friend. The warriors of Kahnawakon were commanded by Chief Paul, the successor of the Great Mohawk. In the engagement which ensued the French were taken off their guard and defeated, several of their officers being slain. Schuyler retreated in the flush of victory, but he was not aware that Sieur de Valrennes was waiting for him midway between Laprairie and Chambly. After two hours of bloody combat, the English were completely routed, fifty of their number being taken prisoners, seventeen killed and a large number wounded; the rest took flight, leaving their flags and baggage behind them. In this combat, Charlevoix tells us that all the Indian captains distinguished themselves for their bravery, and that Chief Paul was slain while exhorting his Iroquois "to fight even to death the enemies of the faith."<sup>1</sup>

1. For Schuyler's account of the battle of Laprairie see *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, pp. 800-804. According to this version, there were 460 men defending the fort, while Valrennes had under him 300 French and 40 Indians.



Meanwhile another contingent of warriors from Kahnawakon reached the battlefield after the fight was over. They were urged to follow the retreating enemy, but when they learned that a number of their Mohawk countrymen were among the English, they would not pursue them farther. This news soon reached Frontenac and ruffled his temper. He at once wrote to say that had the warriors shown any good will in following up the victory over Schuyler, not a man would have escaped to carry to New York the news of the English and Indian defeat. "Instead of that," continued the governor, "they were satisfied with visiting the dead, counting them and robbing them." Frontenac was nettled, and made no secret of his doubts about the loyalty of the Indians.<sup>1</sup> He was trying to convince himself that the warlike instincts of the Christians at Kahnawakon were growing weaker, and that they were not as zealous as they should be in fighting the enemies of the French.

The impression had somehow spread—an impression which persisted until the end of the French *régime*—that a secret pact had been entered into between the Iroquois converts and their pagan tribesmen in the cantons, by which they agreed to spare each other in time of war. Perhaps it would be nearer the mark to say that the converts were friends and allies of the French as long as they fought against the English; but the converts

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Vol. III, pp. 243-253.

were also human, and, although their attitude did not please Frontenac, they insisted upon their independence and freedom of action when the fate of their own dusky brethren was at stake. There was hardly a family at Kahnawakon that did not have friends and relatives in the cantons, and this was a motive cogent enough to keep the converts from pursuing and slaughtering the Mohawks in Schuyler's army after the battle of Laprairie.

Charlevoix, however, gives a different reason for their conduct on that occasion. He informs us that when the warriors, then in the neighbourhood, heard the volleys which were being fired at the burial of the French soldiers who had been slain, they rushed in the direction of Laprairie only to find that the fighting was going on elsewhere, and the time lost in getting to the scene of the encounter enabled the English and the Mohawk remnants of Schuyler's army to escape.<sup>1</sup> The French historian wrote these lines several years after the event had taken place, but the accusation of disloyalty hurled at their flock still rankled in the breasts of the missionaries, and he undoubtedly received his version from those who were on the spot, and consequently were in a much better position to know the whole truth than Frontenac.

The irascible governor was not satisfied with the Indians of Kahnawakon, and he soon found another occasion for airing his suspicions. During

1. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 106.

the aggressive campaign of 1691 and 1692, when hundreds of prowling Iroquois were spreading destruction in the colony, those crafty invaders seemed disposed to leave their convert brethren alone. They were in constant communication with the village; some of them paid frequent visits to their friends and relatives before they returned to the cantons; others remained behind when their companions had gone. They protested that they were tired of war, although their chiefs might not be anxious for peace. If the English did not wish to discuss terms of neutrality they decided to retire to their mats at home and smoke. As a proof of their good intentions, they released twelve prisoners, belonging to the village, whom they had seized; and they exchanged others, whom they had brought with them, for an equal number taken during the raid on Schenectady and still held at Kahnawakon. Bruyas and de Lamber-ville were witnesses of this manœuvring, evidently aimed at some form of reconciliation, but knowing by long experience the duplicity of the Indian mind, they dared not vouch for any element of good faith.

With admirable frankness, Father Bruyas kept Frontenac informed of their movements, notably the exchange of prisoners, hoping that he would profit by the occasion to promote some movement towards peace which had been interrupted since the De Denonville affair. The governor thanked him for his pains in the following terms:

“For a long time I have been remarking that there is too much respect and caution at the Sault, which does not please me; nor am I pleased with the secret relations which these people have with the Mohawks and especially with the Cayugas, among whom they have many relatives. Many times have I notified the missionaries who govern them, and who, I should not like to say, have any part in misleading them, but it is certain that, either through their desire to keep on good terms with those nations and to gain them to Christianity through kindness, or for some other reasons unknown to me, the Jesuits show altogether too much leniency.”

None knew better than the Jesuits that this language was undeserved. Charlevoix, in discussing this episode and similar episodes in his *History of New France*,<sup>1</sup> gave the only reply that was necessary to the accusations of Frontenac and of others equally ill-disposed. “His Majesty’s counsellors know well what judgment should be rendered concerning the missionaries to the Indians: they are aware that the zeal of those men was neither weak nor blind. The intimacy which the neophytes kept up with their relatives in the cantons had no other end in view than to people the village at Sault St. Louis with new converts; in other words, to diminish the number of our enemies and augment the number of our allies, something that was happening every day. It was recognized that the colony had no better soldiers

1. CHARLEVOIX: Vol. II, p. 98.



than those who had abandoned the cantons, the Sault village being one of the strongest French outposts."

This Jesuit historian had spent four years in Canada; he visited the mission in 1708 and again in 1721, and was therefore able to appreciate not merely the bravery of the Iroquois converts but also the sentiments of the French missionaries towards their mother country. If there was any reproach that could be brought against the Jesuits in Canada at the end of the seventeenth century, it was their devotedness to France and to her interests. Those men, however, did not care to remain under suspicion at the French Court. They urged M. de Champigny to give the true version of the general conduct of the Indian converts and to defend their loyalty in any dealings they might have with the pagan Iroquois and other enemies of France. This the intendant did in an admirable letter which has been preserved for us.<sup>1</sup> It was all to the credit of the Indians living at Kahnawakon, and disproved entirely the suspicions and allegations of Count Frontenac.

The intendant begged Count de Pontchartrain to remember the services which the Christian Iroquois in New France had rendered to the French. They had abandoned their own country in leaving the neighbourhood of the English; they had settled in the colony to avoid drunkenness and to seek an asylum where they could make a true profession of Christianity. In times of peace they

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 542..



advanced the interests of the French by their success in hunting, and in times of war they proved their loyalty by sending out scouting parties against their countrymen as well as against the English. Aided by their Huron allies at Lorette and by the Abenakis, they had taken forts from the enemy. They had been disabled by wounds, had lost many of their warriors, and had captured a great many prisoners; they had defeated a large body of Iroquois on Lake Champlain; they had rescued several Frenchmen, after they had been defeated, from the hands of the enemy; they had generously despised the presents and threats of their defeated Iroquois relatives in the cantons, who wished them to abandon the religion and interests of the French. Although war had reduced them to extreme want, they had more than once shown heroic fortitude in the manner in which they endured fire and torture at the stake of their pagan brethren rather than renounce Christianity and their sworn fealty to the King of France. Such conduct afforded convincing proof of their attachment to the French colony, and showed how little foundation there was for the accusations of Frontenac.

## CHAPTER IV

### Indian Activities

1690-1700

*The Iroquois Attack Sault Saint Louis—Frontenac Employs Converts as Delegates—The Congress of 1694—Dekanissorens, the Onondaga Orator—Results of the Congress—Sufferings of the Converts. The Governor's Expedition against the Iroquois. Building of the Grist Mill—Intercourse with the Cantons—Importance of the Mohawk Praying Castle—French and English seeking the friendship of the Iroquois—The Jesuits protect the Faith of the Converts—Chief Sagronwadie's visit to Albany—Schuyler in Montreal—De Callière's Treaty of Peace.*

THE haughty reception which Count Frontenac gave Sir William Phips before Quebec, in 1690, and the subsequent disaster which befell the English at Laprairie, were bits of news which had already reached the Iroquois cantons. These incidents may have raised the prestige of the French among the Mohawks, but the Schenectady affair was still vivid in their minds, and their resentment was as strong as ever. Although no serious movement of a hostile nature was anticipated in the French colony, unimportant skirmishes were taking place here and there on the outskirts; bands of English and Mohawks were

raiding the settlements while the French remained on the defensive, except when small platoons made sudden attacks on roving bands of Iroquois and brought back an occasional scalp. The Iroquois at Kahnawakon had been left unmolested so far, but they were exposed to the enemy who were soon to pay them a hostile visit. Happily they were not unprepared. The governor of Montreal had taken the precaution of sending the Marquis de Crisafy with a platoon of twenty French soldiers to live with them, for the purpose of protecting them in emergencies. <sup>1</sup>

In November, 1692, three hundred and fifty pagans from the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca cantons made a sudden attack on the little village of Kahnawakon. After a brisk skirmish the enemy were repulsed, but during the action a small cannon in the fort burst, and the Indians immediately began to clamour for two new ones to replace it. The foresight of De Callière in so opportunely providing them with reinforcements had greatly pleased them. They therefore promised that, if the enemy should come again, they would receive them in true Indian fashion, which was to allow them to enter the fort, then seize them, and either knock them on the head or send them to the governor for punishment.

A few weeks later a band of roving Iroquois attacked some hunters of Kahnawakon near Chambly, killing four and making eight prisoners. The alarm was promptly given. Fifty warriors

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 556.

immediately set out in pursuit of the assailants overtaking them at Lake Champlain, where they destroyed the members of the band and rescued the prisoners.

La Plaque, chief of the mission Indians, who was about to be gratified with a visit to France,<sup>1</sup> was conspicuous for his zeal. He was a nephew of the Great Mohawk and, in addition to good looks and a noble bearing, he had inherited the military prowess of his illustrious uncle. While on a scouting expedition along Lake St. Sacrament, he perceived the enemy building canoes. He spent three days watching them, in the hope of seizing a prisoner from whom he expected to learn what their designs were; but having failed in this, he secretly placed in one of their cabins three skull-crackers, a mystic challenge to their chiefs to attack Montreal if they dared.<sup>2</sup> He then enlisted a party of one hundred and sixty warriors either to defend the village of Kahnawakon or to strike a blow at the Mohawks in their own country. He also urged the French to attack the pagan Iroquois on a large scale, and even offered his best men to act as guides into the very heart of the cantons. This generous offer was rejected, for Frontenac could not get rid of his prejudices.

1. Although an Iroquois chief, La Plaque was also a lieutenant in the French troops. Charlevoix calls him a "pretty poor Christian", and relates (*Histoire*, Vol. III, p. 309) that while engaged in one of the skirmishes frequent at that epoch, he recognized his own father fighting in the enemy's ranks. He spared his life but gave him this timely warning: "You gave me my life; I give you back yours to-day. I have now paid the debt I owe you, but do not fall into my hands again."

2. *Docts. Colon, Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 479.



He was not loath, however, to employ Christians of Kahnawakon when it suited his purpose, seizing every opportunity to communicate with the Iroquois in the cantons. He found easy intermediaries among the converts, who paid frequent visits to their friends and relatives; he even employed Indian women to carry unofficial messages. A squaw was invited to tell her people how glad the governor would be to see them visiting Canada; with a touch of the picturesque, he informed her that "the sun shining on him could not give him greater pleasure."

Father Milet had been in captivity since the De Denonville treachery. He had been tortured at that time, but his life was spared and he was adopted by the Oneida chief, Tareiha, whose two sons were held by the French. In 1691, efforts had been begun for his release, for in that year Robert Livingston, of Albany, wrote to say that "the French had taken two Indian boys belonging to the family of Tarieha who is master of the Jesuit Milet, prisoner at Oneida, and the French desire that the said Tarieha may acquaint them how and what way they shall proceed that they may exchange the said two boys for the Jesuit Milet and desire an answer in this matter from Tarieha. <sup>1</sup>

It was not until two years later that the Oneida chief, who had rendered kind services not only to Father Milet but also to other French prisoners, came to interview Count Frontenac. A letter

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, p. 783.





TOMB OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA



« LE MOULIN DES JÉSUITES »



addressed to the captive missionary, some time later, showed that the French governor was anxious to know the result of his negotiations with Tarieha; in fact, he was disappointed when no answer came. But his letter had never reached its destination; it had been intercepted by the English, and its interesting contents were communicated to the chiefs of the cantons. It informed them that Frontenac still had designs against the Senecas, that two hundred bark canoes were being built in Montreal, probably for an expedition against them, that the village at Kahnawakon had been strongly stockaded, and that, besides its own warriors, a garrison of twenty soldiers was permanently stationed there.

The Marquis de Crisafy, the officer in charge, was named a few months later by Frontenac to superintend the rebuilding at the fort at Cataragui. The old governor had this work very much at heart and the converts were ordered to give him all the help they could; but this order was countermanded when the Court of France sent troops from the colony to attack Fort Nelson, and when several Indians from Kahnawakon were added to the French attachment who accompanied Sieur de Serigny to Hudson's Bay.

Meanwhile the negotiations begun by Frontenac and Tarieha had been partially successful. Father Milet was released and returned to Kahnawakon, and with him came the Oneida family which had held him for nearly seven years. Charlevoix informs us that this family had been converted

to the Christian faith through the efforts of their captive missionary, Tarieha's wife receiving in baptism the name of Suzanna. She moved with the rest of the converts from Kahnawakon to the new mission opposite Devil's Island in 1696, where the historian saw her in 1708. She died there after a long life, having edified her Indian neighbours by the practice of all the Christian virtues.<sup>1</sup> Her name still lives. The little creek running through the site of the village, occupied by the Indians from 1696 to 1716, is called *La Susanne*.

Tarieha's visit to the colony, in 1693, was not merely to secure an exchange of prisoners, but also to remind Count Frontenac that the cantons wanted peace.<sup>2</sup> The opportunity was too good to be lost, and the governor immediately suggested that two deputies from each of the cantons, ten in all, including Dekanissorens, the eloquent Onondagan, should pay him a visit the following summer to begin negotiations. Tarieha promised to do his best to carry out the suggestion, and in the summer of 1694, two delegates arrived at Kahnawakon. They were on their way to interview the governor, but they stopped over at the village to invite some of the chiefs to return with them to Albany to talk about peace.<sup>3</sup> They then proceeded to Quebec, where a very cool reception awaited them. Although they carried

1. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 135.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 130.

3. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 578.



wampum belts to back up their authority, they found Frontenac in one of his unpleasant moods. He abruptly refused their imprudent request to allow his children of Kahnawakon to return with them to Albany to discuss peace. He told them plainly that his agreement with Tareiha, the previous year, was that Dekanissorens, with ten delegates, should come to discuss that important question, and that he did not intend to talk about such matters with two obscure envoys. He rejected their proposals and their belts, and by studied marks of contempt made them feel that he did not care whether or not peace were declared. He told them that he simply regarded them as spies of Governor Fletcher of New York, and that he found it rather daring on their part to come to the colony to seduce his Christian children. However, he could not forget that he was still their father, and that they were all his children, although rebellious and disobedient ones, and he was therefore willing to give them time for reflection. He would suspend the tomahawk for two moons on condition that Dekanissorens, accompanied by two chiefs from each canton, would come to show that the Iroquois really desired peace. If at the end of that time they failed to appear, he would pay no further attention to their voices, even though they wished to submit new proposals. Nay more, he would punish those who should dare to take part in such an embassy; the chiefs alone would find the road to Quebec free;

their voices alone he wished to hear; to all others he would close his ears.

This haughty language surprised the two envoys; crestfallen they returned to Montreal and crossed over to Kahnawakon to present the belts which Frontenac refused to receive. But La Plaque and the other chiefs were on their guard, not daring to give Frontenac any cause for offence. Thus the second welcome which awaited the two delegates was as chilly as the one they had received at Quebec. The chiefs at Kahnawakon declined the invitation to accompany them to Albany, protesting anew their desire to serve Ononthio only. "We have nothing to do with your governor or with Albany," they asserted, "and we have no desire to go with you to your villages."

The envoys, however, appeared to be in good faith, for they carried out their instructions when they returned home. In May, 1694, punctually at the end of two months, Dekanissorens and two chiefs from each of the Five Nations arrived at Quebec. This time they were received by Frontenac with all the courtesy and with all the ceremonial with which it was his custom to impress the aborigines. The French governor, in his intercourse with the Indians, always played this rôle in a masterly manner. During a short preliminary interview, he told the Indians that he deplored their misfortunes, and that he was touched with compassion for their errors. He then promised to do all in his power to help them to secure peace.

Three days later, clothed in his robes of state, surrounded by a galaxy of notables, including the bishop, the intendant, the clergy and the civic officials, Frontenac again appeared before them, and the formal discourses began. Ten wampum belts were presented, each carrying its own message, but the substance of all the speeches delivered by the envoys was a reproach against former French governors who had waged unjust wars on the tribes and were too drastic in their methods of warfare. This, they averred, caused the Iroquois to strike heavy blows in reprisal and in self-defence, for which they were now sorry.

Dekanissorens, the chief spokesman, was a renowned orator belonging to the Onondaga tribe. Near the end of his harangue, which was long and subtle, he made a special appeal to the Kahnawakon Indians present. "I address myself to the Indians of the Sault," he said, "whom I formerly called Iroquois. Now that you are children of Onontiio, if he condescends to grant us peace, I exhort you to think as he does and communicate his thoughts to us. Let us cultivate peace on both sides and put an end to all subjects of contention. We have been butchering one another long enough. Forget the past as we wish to do, because if you do not obey Onontiio, He who is in heaven, and who is the Arbiter of life, will punish more severely you who are Christians than us who are not." Strange but timely words falling from the lips of a pagan Indian! And then, throwing out a hint decidedly insinuating, and revealing an inspiration

received from Albany, he addressed the governor directly: "We do not ask you to send us back those of our people whom you may have here; but if there be any among them who may desire to return to our country, we ask you not to keep them, but only those who wish to remain. We assure you that we shall on our side send back from our villages all the prisoners who shall be willing to return." Dekanissorens then closed his eloquent speech with these words, while presenting the last belt: "We were all in darkness; light was no longer visible; the heavens were obscured by clouds and fogs. In order to dispel those clouds I again fasten the sun above our heads, so that we may once more behold it and hereafter enjoy the beautiful light of peace."

Such was the discourse of the Onondaga Indian, delivered with a grace rarely vouchsafed to an unpolished and uncivilized people. It was listened to with rapt attention by the most influential among the clergy and among the laity of the colony, and the orator concluded with so great a show of respect and submission to the French governor that he profoundly impressed his pale-faced hearers.

Indian etiquette forbade an immediate reply to the proposals of the envoys; wise men, they thought, should take time to reflect on what they had to say. It was only on the following day that Frontenac, who was well versed in Indian ways and customs, replied to the message conveyed by each belt. Surrounded by the same



trappings of splendour as he displayed at the previous session, his authoritative voice was listened to in silence by Dekanissorens and his countrymen. There was no yielding in the governor's assurance that he alone was right; no admission that he could be deceived in his estimate of his own acts or of those of the Iroquois. He was glad to see them coming submissive and repentant as was the duty of children who had committed such heinous crimes against their father. He promised to forget the past, and he was perfectly willing to suspend the hatchet which was well-nigh falling. But the Five Nations must remember that the peace which was about to begin with them did not include peace with the English. If his tomahawk turned against the English, theirs also must turn in the same direction. Within eighty days, all prisoners in their villages, men, women, or children, French or Indian, had to be sent back to the colony; he in turn agreed to surrender all held in Canada; and last, but not least in the minds of the envoys, he would allow all Indians who so desired to return to their own country. An entertainment and a distribution of presents closed this memorable congress. And yet, notwithstanding all their apparent earnestness, the delegates did not impress Count Frontenac; he knew their skill in double-dealing; he had no confidence in them or in their promises. Dekanissorens, their chief spokesman, was a well-known partisan of the English, and while a special invitation to visit Quebec may



have flattered his pride, it did not change his real sentiments.<sup>1</sup>

Events turned out as the French governor had expected. The only tangible result, in three years, was the release of some Frenchmen, including Milet, after his seven years' captivity among the Oneidas. The ascendancy which this intrepid Jesuit had gained over his captors was resented by the English, who made many ineffectual efforts to get him into their power. But he had been formally adopted, and the Oneidas would not release him until Frontenac's request for his freedom finally brought the matter to a head. He reached Kahnawakon in the autumn of 1694.

Besides the exchange of a few French prisoners, little good came of the meeting at Quebec; the influence of Colonel Fletcher and the Albany officials was strong enough to change the trend of events. Not merely were the conditions agreed upon between Frontenac and the eleven envoys left unfulfilled, but the pagan Iroquois from the cantons continued to prowl around Montreal and the surrounding country, attacking everyone they met, seizing and slaughtering all who had the misfortune to fall into their hands. Even the Mohawks of Kahnawakon, when caught off their guard, did not escape. Charlevoix describes in detail<sup>2</sup> the martyrdom of several converts, who

1. Charlevoix, while uncertain as to the conversion of Dekanissorens during these important negotiations, assures us (*Hist. Nouv. France*, Vol. II, p. 136), that this great Onondaga orator and chieftain died among the Indians at Sault St. Louis.

2. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. I, pp. 587-600.

endured long and excruciating sufferings and finally death, rather than deny the faith taught them by the French missionaries. The Christian heroism they displayed under torture made Father Chau-chetière remark that it could no longer be said that the Jesuits were deluding the people of Old France when they spoke of their wards as being savages only in name and in dress.

"We had three or four martyrs here," he wrote from Kahnawakon, "who were burned by their own kindred in their very cabins, because they refused to abandon the faith and the French; I knew them all." He cited the heroic example of a young Indian mother who had been captured the year previously, a league from the village. "She was nursing, and had a little child two years old hanging at her neck. She was taken to her own country, where she was badly treated. She was beaten so severely that, we are informed, there was not a single part of her body which was not covered with blood; and to prove this, it is related that when she threw down a pack, which had been placed on her back, on the mat whereon she was told to sit, the mat was at once covered with blood. Soon afterwards they bound the little child to her neck and burned it with the mother. The French who were slaves among the Iroquois were eye-witnesses of all this butchery and cannot relate these things to us without weeping, and without drawing tears from the eyes of their listeners." <sup>1</sup>

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIV, p. 145.

In 1695, the Iroquois again attacked the homes of the colonists along the Rivière des Prairies and killed several of the inmates. Farmers were seized and taken into captivity from Verchères, the place where the heroic Madeleine had distinguished herself three years previously. Twenty-nine Frenchmen were slain at Laprairie and others were carried off alive. A band of Iroquois attacked the inhabitants at the Lake of Two Mountains and killed several of them. Warriors from Kahnawakon followed up the enemy, but these wily savages had the secret of disappearing as suddenly as they came. Frenchmen and Indians pursued another raiding band as far westward as the present site of Ganancque, but the lack of provisions and the depth of the snow, during the severe winter of 1695-96, rendered their journey useless.

The old governor was determined, however, that these cruel outrages should not go unpunished, and he spent the first months of 1696 preparing for another expedition. In the July of that year, eight hundred French soldiers and five hundred Christian Indians from the various missions had reached a rendezvous on Isle Perrot, the Iroquois contingent from Kahnawakon being under the command of Sieur Maricourt, the well-known interpreter. Although seventy years of age, Count Frontenac placed himself at the head of this army—"the strongest that had yet been formed in Canada," writes Bibaud—and accompanied by De Callière, De Vaudreuil and De Ramezay, he sailed up the St. Lawrence and across Lake Ontario,

and attacked the Oneida and Onondaga cantons, delivering thirty French prisoners and destroying the villages that fell in his way. Few of the enemy were slain, for at the approach of the French soldiery they escaped to the forest with their families, but not, however, until they had given examples of savage heroism worthy of a better cause. Charlevoix mentions the case of an Onondaga Indian, nearly a hundred years old, who was seized and who awaited death with the intrepidity of an ancient Roman senator. Despite his great age he was handed over to the Indians in Frontenac's army, who vented on him the rage and hatred occasioned by the escape of the rest. "It was a singular spectacle," writes the historian, "to see four hundred angry savages around a decrepit old Indian, from whom, notwithstanding his sufferings, they could not draw even a sigh, and who, as long as he could breathe, kept reproaching them for having become slaves of the French, for whom he showed the utmost contempt. The only complaint that this Onondaga stoic uttered was when his torturers started to give him three or four finishing strokes with their knives. 'You should not thus shorten my life,' he exclaimed, 'for you would have longer time to learn how to die like men.'" <sup>1</sup>

The French troops had devastated only the Onondaga canton. A council of war decided to do similar work among the Cayugas and Oneidas. The carrying out of the details of this work was

1. CHARLEVOIX: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 173.



left to De Callière and Maricourt. Preparations were under way with this object in view when, to the surprise of all his officers, Frontenac suddenly gave orders for a rapid retreat to Montreal. This decision excited much resentment among the Iroquois from Kahnawakon whom Maricourt was commanding; but the inflexible Frontenac had spoken and there was nothing left to do but to obey. The governor evidently felt that he had done enough to force the Confederacy to accept his terms of peace, and, besides, he did not wish to leave the colony without military protection. Charlevoix, however, gives another reason.<sup>1</sup> Rumors had been afloat for years after the event that neither Frontenac nor his military staff had any desire to crush the Iroquois outright. If there were no hostile Indians to wage war against, the king would probably reorganize the troops and reduce the number of officers in the colony. As the governor had the right of appointment to most of the military employments, he would, in the event of a change, lose a great deal of his influence, something his pride could not tolerate.

Frontenac quitted the Iroquois country on the ninth of August, with the loss of only four men, after having humbled but not subdued the mortal enemies of the French. Among the prisoners brought back to Montreal were two Senecas who had their lives spared in return for the kind treatment their nation had been showing French

1. *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, pp. 174-175.

prisoners in recent years. Another prisoner was an Indian boy, grandson of Garakontie, the famous chief of the Onondagas, who during his lifetime had been so much attached to the French. The arrival of this young Onondagan gave special pleasure to the Jesuits, for at Kahnawakon they would be able to instruct him thoroughly, and in this way show their gratitude for the protection his illustrious grandfather had given them during the De Denonville trouble, a score of years previously.

Meanwhile, apart from war and the clamours of war, which filled the country in those years, the mission of St. Francis Xavier was enjoying considerable prosperity. The neighbouring forest had been gradually disappearing along the river in front of the seigniory and small tracts of land were being cultivated, yielding crops sufficient to supply the needs of the converts. A windmill, built near the mouth of the Portage river, ground their corn. The erection of this mill was undoubtedly hastened by a peremptory order issued by the French minister Colbert, in June, 1686, obliging all the seigneurs in New France to provide milling facilities for their tenants within one year, otherwise any private individual might build a mill and the seigneur would lose all privileges connected therewith.<sup>1</sup> At Sault St. Louis, the Jesuits were not seigneurs in the ordinary sense of the term; they did not treat their Indian converts as *censitaires*, or tenants, from whom *foi*

1. *Arrêts et Ordonnances Royales*, Québec, 1854, Vol. I, p. 255.

*et hommage* were exacted, but rather as children whose interests they made their own. But they saw the wisdom of preventing them from coming in contract with the white settlers in their neighbourhood, and, a few years later, they built a more elaborate grist-mill in stone, on the edge of the Lachine rapids, a couple of miles further west.

The swiftness of the current at that spot furnished ample power for the grinding of corn, and proved at the same time an excellent protection against hostile attacks from the riverside; but it was a serious obstacle for the converts themselves when they approached the village by water, landing being as difficult for them as it would be for an enemy. At the cost of much labour and trouble they built a wharf into the rapid and provided it with a basin where they could moor their canoes in safety. No record exists, as far as we know, to show when these improvements were made, but it was probably between the years 1690 and 1696, the period when the Jesuits lived at Kahnawakon.<sup>1</sup> The wharf and the mill, known as *le moulin des Jésuites*, are still standing, both dilapidated relics of a dim past.

Father Jacques Bruyas, who had taken such an important part in bringing about this state of prosperity, was soon to be burdened with the responsibility of all the Jesuit missions in Canada. He was promoted in 1693, and after an interval of two years, during which Father Jacques de

1. The mill, however, may not have been built before 1718, when the neighbouring land was added to the Laprairie seignory.

Lamberville occupied the office, Father Cholenec returned to Kahnawakon as superior of the mission. He had been absent for ten years, and many changes had taken place during that decade. The village had become one of the best-known Indian settlements in America; it was certainly the most important one in Canada. The part its warriors were playing in the various raids against the enemy had given it a paramount influence with the civic authorities. In Albany it was known as the Mohawk Praying Castle; it had become more and more an object of hatred to the English, not merely because the religion the converts professed was idolatrous in their eyes, but because its preachers and leaders were Jesuits to whose activities the English governors attributed their own lack of success in drawing the Christian Mohawks back to the cantons. The men now helping Cholenec were experienced in the mission field. It will suffice to name Jacques de Lamberville, Pierre Lagrené<sup>1</sup> and the veteran Julien Garnier. All had laboured in the cantons; all knew the character of the Iroquois Indians; all were masters in the art of governing them.

The constant intercourse of the converts with their friends and relatives in the cantons, an intercourse which was favoured by the Jesuits for reasons

1. Pierre de Lagrené was born in Paris on November 12, 1659, and entered the Jesuit order at the age of eighteen. He taught classics in the colleges of Hesdin and Eu for seven years. His studies in philosophy and theology prior to his ordination to the priesthood were made at the famous Jesuit college at Laflèche. He completed his final training in the Order at Rouen and started for Canada in 1694. He exercised the ministry at Sault St. Louis, Lorette, Montreal and Quebec. He died at the college of Quebec in 1736.—*De Rochemonteix*, Vol. III, p. 364.



which have been already stated, also tended to give the village a special status with both French and English. Kahnawakon had become a sort of listening post for the governors of New York and of Canada. Much of the information they received of each other's aims and doings came from the little village. It is only necessary to read the documents of the period to see the importance which was given to the testimony, even a chance remark, of one who had lived or who had merely passed through the Praying Castle on the bank of the St. Lawrence.

Kahnawakon was playing a lively part in the events of the day, but there was a danger hovering over it that could not be overlooked. The village was an advanced post; it had been attacked before and it was liable to be attacked again. Any raid by way of Lake Champlain or the Upper St. Lawrence was quite sure to overtake it, and from a military point of view it was worth carefully preserving. A small French garrison was permanently stationed there, but after seven years of service the wooden stockades surrounding the village were getting dilapidated and were in no way capable of resisting the attack of an enemy. In 1695, after an appeal was made to the governor of Montreal to remedy this deficiency, M. de Callière crossed over the St. Lawrence to make a personal examination of the fort. Evidently the physical condition of things at Kahnawakon did not please him, for after a consultation with

the Jesuits in charge, he decided to remove the village to a better site, a couple of miles westward, and traced the outlines of a new fort on a slight elevation facing Devil's Island. The building of the fort and the church and the cabins for the missionaries and their flock took up the remainder of that year; it was in 1696—"according to a document still preserved," writes Father Burtin—that the third transfer of the mission of St. Francis Xavier was effected. Kahnawakon was abandoned, and the new Indian village of Kahnawaké—now better known to the English as Caughnawaga—was to become the centre of intense activity during the next quarter of a century.<sup>1</sup>

In the years following this migration, and probably because the village was now easier of approach, the converts had frequent visits from other tribes, usually hunters on their way home from their expeditions on the St. Lawrence and on the Upper Ottawa; sometimes friends and relatives from the Mohawk valley came to receive their hospitality; at other times, it was a few prisoners who were brought in and incorporated into one or other of the clans. In addition to the daily routine of services in the church, their own

1. The Indians retained the name *Kahnawake* for their new village opposite Devil's Island. After they abandoned it in 1716, it became known as *La Susanne* and *Kanatakwenke*. In all French correspondence it was known as Sault St. Louis, a name which was official during the French régime and which has remained official down to the present day in French records in the Province of Quebec. However, it was only in 1712 that Sault St. Louis—*Ad Saltem Sti Ludovici*—appears in Jesuit catalogues. Laprairie—the *Kentake* of the Iroquois—was known at various times as *Missio Iroquarorum prope Montem Regium*, *Residentia a Pratis*, *Residentia Sti Francisci Xaverii ad Pratum Stae Magdalenae*. Kahnawake and Kahnawakon were styled *Sti Francisci Xaverii ad Saltem*.

hunting and fishing and the tilling of the soil served to keep the converts busy. In 1696 and in 1697, the little village was so much in the lime-light that the writer of the *Narrative of Occurrences* in the colony for those two years, a narrative destined to meet the eyes of the Court officials in France, thought it well to give some local news that kept the Indians of Caughnawaga interested in life.

A squaw, captured near Schenectady, related that thirty Hurons from Michillimackinac had gone to live at Albany, a fresh bit of evidence that the English were active in the West. A Caughnawaga Indian had recently arrived in the village with the news that Dekanissorens, the Onondaga orator, was contemplating a visit to Montreal to talk of peace again, and he was reproached for it by the English. Otachecté, an Oneida chief, and three of his tribesmen, had come to discuss the same interesting topic and, as a proof of their good faith, brought back a French prisoner with them. The Onondagas were awaiting Otachecté's return with considerable uneasiness, as they wished to learn how he was being treated. On his return, however, they were so satisfied with his reception that they decided to send two of their chiefs with wampum belts. But this embassy was delayed for a time owing to the difficulties created by some warriors of their canton who were intent on avenging the death of their great chief, Black Pot, who had been slain by the Indian allies of the French, the Algonquins, near the Bay of Quinté. Mean-

while they sent their Oneida brother, Otachecté, back again with four belts, each bearing its own message of peace and good will. One of these messages was addressed directly to the Jesuits, their former missionaries, then living at Caughnawaga, asking them to intercede with Ononthio and pray to God for the promotion of peace.

The Onondaga embassy finally arrived, not however, with Dekanissorens at its head, but with Tegayste, a chief who had lived for many years at the mission. The gist of the message conveyed by Tegayste was that the nation still continued to weep over the death of Black Pot and over the loss of other friends who had been killed by the Algonquins; and that as they had no courage to travel, they begged their friends in Canada to be patient. Caughnawaga, in its turn, sent a convert to the Mohawks, inviting them to come to Canada, where they could live in peace and quiet with the French. The wampum belt which this delegate brought back did not give much hope of success with that nation. If the Mohawks came, it was not because they were disposed to settle in Canada, as their Christian brethren had surmised, but rather to treat for peace. Later on, when peace was concluded, they would see what could be done.

These few details, taken from a contemporary document, give a more or less perfect idea of the gossip which kept the minds of the Indians at Caughnawaga intensely occupied in the last years of the seventeenth century. One feature, standing



out in bold relief, was the constant intercourse kept up between the cantons and the Praying Castle on the St. Lawrence. Intimacy between the converts and their pagan brethren seemed to grow as the years went on, one of the strongest reasons being the influence of the French missionaries who were living among them and whose perfect command of their language excited profound admiration. This growing fellowship, openly professed, had long been a source of anxiety to the English, who blamed the Jesuits for it. The softening influence which conversion to Christianity wrought in the Iroquois character was not unwelcome at Albany, but the consequent attachment which the converts showed to those who were responsible for the change was looked upon with disfavour; the religious prejudices of the epoch so blinded English colonists and traders that they could see nothing good in the French missionaries.

The Earl of Bellomont, who succeeded Benjamin Fletcher as governor of New York, was a bitter enemy of the Jesuits. He blamed them for the gradual weakening of the Iroquois fighting strength in the cantons.<sup>1</sup> One of his first acts on assuming

1. An example of Bellomont's credulity when the Jesuits were concerned is given in a letter which he sent to the Lords of Trade in July 1700: "I meet with an old story from the gentlemen of Albany," he wrote, "which I think worth the relating to your Lordships. Decanissore, one of the sachems of the Onondagas, married one of the Praying Indians in Canada, (by Praying Indians is meant such as are instructed by the Jesuits) this woman was taught to poison as well as to pray. The Jesuits had furnished her with so subtil a poison, and taught her a leger de main in using it; so that whoever she had a mind to poison, she would drink to 'em in a cup of water and then let drop the poison from under her nail (which are always very long, for the Indians never pare 'em) into the cup. This woman was so true a disciple of the Jesuits that she has poison'd a multitude of our Five Nations that were best affected to us; She lately coming from Canada, in company of some of

office was to convene the chiefs of the Five Nations for the purpose of learning from them what he could do to assuage their sorrows and give them pleasure. The wily Indians asked him to write Ononthio to allow their relatives at Caughnawaga and at the other Christian missions to visit them in the cantons; for they had decided that once their Canadian visitors should arrive they would employ every means to hold them. The Indians were aware that in making these proposals to Bello-mont they were completely entering into the new governor's way of thinking, and were echoing sentiments that for many years had been prevailing at Albany. In a letter to the Lords of Trade, in 1696, Livinius Van Schaick, an Albany alderman, <sup>1</sup> wrote concerning the French:—

“Under pretense of converting those Indians to the Christian religion they have sent certain Jesuits amongst them, who, by subtle insinuations, have endeavoured to draw them from their own country to Canada, persuading them that they could be better and more advantageously instructed in the Christian religion there; and so far have they prevailed that they have drawn a considerable

our Indians, who went to visit their relations in that country who have taken sides with the French. And there being among others a Protestant Mohack, (a proper goodly young man) him this woman poison'd so that he died two days journey short of Albany, and the Magistrates of that town sent for his body and gave it a Christian burial. The woman comes to Albany, where some of the Mohacks happening to be, and among them a young man nearly related to the man that had been poison'd, who espying the woman, cries out with great horror, that there was that beastly woman that had poison'd so many of their friends, and 'twas not fit that she should live any longer in the world to do more mischief; and so made up to her and with a clubb beat out her brains.”—*Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 689.

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 168.

number of them into Canada. These deserters have done the French very eminent service in the wars they have been in, and are still engaged in, with other Indians, insomuch that without them it would have been impossible for the French to preserve Canada . . . . If the small number of Indians whom the French have drawn from the Five Nations have so terrified Albany, the consequence must necessarily be dreadful should they gain the whole body of these nations. The inhabitants of all the northern frontiers would have to abandon their dwellings or be destroyed. The French make very large offerings of presents daily to induce those Indians to a peace with them by the insinuations of one Pierre Milet, a Jesuit who has lived with them for six years and is by them very much esteemed. He is a perfect master of their languages and customs; and it is much to be feared he will influence them greatly unless prevented in time. Various means have been used to induce the Indians to send this Jesuit from amongst them, but to no purpose; for though many of them are persuaded that he ought to be removed, yet his friends will not suffer him to be taken from amongst them.”<sup>1</sup>

In this passage the writer gave a very good summary of the relations between the French and English and the Five Nations in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Both Governments were

1. When Van Schaick wrote this letter in 1696, evidently he was not yet aware that Father Peter Milet had been released at the request of the French governor. This zealous missionary asked to return again to the Oneidas, but “the aspect of the times did not admit it.” Charlevoix, who during his sojourn in Canada lived with Milet several years, speaks of him in terms of high esteem. (*Hist. Nouv. France*, Vol. II, p. 200).

working steadily to secure an alliance, but the independent red men, while professing love and loyalty to the French when they were in Canada, professed the same loyalty to the English when they visited Orange or Manhattan. In 1694, at the congress held in Quebec, the eloquent tongue of Dekanissorens proclaimed their devotedness to Frontenac; five years later, they were just as eloquent in proclaiming their fidelity to the Earl of Bellomont, for, in 1700, at a great council held at Albany, in the presence of this very governor, they encouraged one another to stand up against the encroachments of the French.<sup>1</sup> Addressing Bellomont and his fellow-warriors among the Mohawks, an Onondaga sachem exclaimed:

"We seek shelter under your tree of welfare, whose branches stretch to the uttermost limits of the Five Nations. Let us sit under its shadow hand in hand together. Let us leave the governor of Canada for the many cheats he hath put upon us, especially for having handed us the tomahawk and urged us to fight against New England, a deed which we regretted very much after we had been better informed. Let us sever relations with him entirely and resolve not to listen again to what he may have to say. For a long time the French governor had been our father and we his children, and he always gave us fair words, but now, finding that he is false, we have closed our path to him in laying trees across, so that none can go thither."

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 758.



A certain element among the Mohawks had been submitting to the influence of the ministers of the Gospel whom Bellomont had imported from England, and they were well pleased with the decision arrived at by their Onondaga brethren to close their path to the French, but they added that there was another path open to Canada which should also be closed, namely, that leading to the religion of the French. "Our brother Corlaer,"<sup>1</sup> they declared, "is causing us to be instructed in learning greatly superior to the learning we receive in Canada, therefore we desire you to come and share our belief with us, so that thereby we shall become one flesh and one blood."

During Bellomont's term of office, the Jesuit missionaries were called upon to solve the difficult problem of keeping their neophytes out of the hands of the ministers of the Reformed religion. They did not always succeed, as the words above quoted show, but the defections were usually among the Mohawks who spent most of their time in the neighbourhood of the fur depots, and whose interest in the Gospel was measured by the value of the presents they received. The Jesuits used every legitimate means to safeguard the faith of their converts, but their activities did not go beyond this important duty. They exercised very little control over their purely business transactions; when the converts kept intact the religion

1. Corlaer was a Dutchman so beloved by the Indians of the cantons that in memory of him they called the governors of New York after him (*Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. III, p. 395). Sir Edmund Andros was the first governor to receive the title (*Ibid.* Vol. III, p. 558).

they had taught them, they were satisfied. Count Frontenac had already reproached them for their passiveness and lack of supervision, insinuating thereby that they were unwittingly playing into the hands of the Albany merchants. The accusation dated back to his first term of office; his personal interests were at stake, and he was bitterly opposed to the traffic which, he surmised, was being carried on between Albany and Caughnawaga. But Count Frontenac died in 1698, two years after the migration of the Christians to their new village opposite Devil's Island, and Chevalier de Callière, his successor, was beginning to patch up a peace with the Iroquois cantons. The road to Albany was open again, and the Christian Indians claimed freedom to go whithersoever they wished in order to get the highest prices for their wares. In this they were only following the example of the French hunters, many of whom went to Albany to secure passes to trade in the Iroquois country, a favour which the French governor had refused them.

In 1700, an incident happened which showed that the perfect freedom enjoyed by the converts trading with the English did not affect their attachment to the religion taught them by the French. A Caughnawaga chief, Sagronwadie, went to Albany, as spokesman for a delegation from the village, to renew commercial relations. He frankly told the Commissioners of Indian Affairs that he and his fellow-braves desired to trade with them as formerly, but stipulated with equal frankness

that, if they came eventually, they wished to be well treated. "We are here on the score of trade," he pleaded, "treat us kindly; do not be too dear with your goods. I have encouraged these Indians to come with me; therefore sell your goods cheap." Evidently Sagronwadie had doubts about their sense of justice. "I must again repeat and desire you to be kind to my people," he insisted; "let them have such goods as they need at reasonable prices. We perceive that your loaves of bread are small, and the sachems of the Five Nations here tell us that, if we were to return to live with you, you would not allow us to carry our beaver-skins elsewhere, but would compel us to sell them at your own prices."

This proposition, put with savage bluntness, received an answer that was non-committal. The commissioners assured the envoys that during their stay they should be kindly entertained and should have the privilege of going whithersoever they pleased. A fortnight later, July 3, 1700, Sagronwadie and his companions received a formal reply from the officials,<sup>1</sup> who declared that they were glad to see them in Albany, where they, no doubt, found goods reasonably cheap, and were receiving full satisfaction in the matters they came to discuss. The delegates were also assured that although they had deserted their native country for a place where everything was much dearer than at Albany, yet no difference would be made; they would be treated as kindly and receive the

<sup>1</sup> 1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 692.

same protection as if they had always remained at home. "Since, however, you allege," the commissioners added, "that it is your love of the Christian religion that made you desert your native country and run to Canada to be instructed by the French priests, we hope in a short time to have Protestant ministers to instruct your kindred and relations in the true Christian religion which, added to your love for your country, we hope will prevail upon you to come back and live among your people. Your fires are still burning in your cabins; those you left are still ready to receive you with stores of plenty to make you live forever happy."

Hoping that these words would have some influence on the Caughnawaga Indians, the commissioners backed them up with gifts, a fat hog, some venison and a barrel of strong beer, to help them make merry with their friends during the rest of their stay in Albany, and with a quantity of powder and shot so that they might not lack provisions on their way home. It was evidently a case of trying to win the envoys over, but the wise Sagronwadie had formerly lived in the cantons; he knew the conditions existing there and was not so easily trapped. "We are come to trade and not to treat about religion," replied the Caughnawaga chief. "However, this much I must say: During all the time I was here before I went to Canada, I never heard anything talked of religion or the least mention made of converting us to the Christian faith. We shall be glad to hear if at last you are



so piously inclined as to take some pains to instruct your Indians in the Christian religion. I cannot say; perhaps this may induce some to return to their native country. Had you begun sooner and had you had ministers to instruct your Indians in the Christian faith, I doubt whether any of us would have ever deserted our native country; but I must say that I am wholly beholden to the French in Canada for the light I have received, to know that there was a Saviour born for mankind; and now we are taught that God is everywhere and we can be instructed in Canada or at the end of the earth as well as here."

Sagronwadie was only one of many animated with similar sentiments, who had left their villages for Caughnawaga, and had chosen to remain there, satisfied with their lot. This was due to the influence of the Jesuits in the cantons—an influence which was reducing fur profits in Albany as well as lowering the number of possible warriors available for military purposes. Naturally the English were resentful and were looking for an antidote. It was hoped that the introduction of ministers would stop the exodus northward; religion would then go hand in hand with the fur trade.

A confirmation of this policy is gathered from an interesting interview<sup>1</sup> which took place in Montreal, in that same year, between a merchant named Bondour and a noteworthy citizen of Albany, David Schuyler, one of several of that

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 747.

name who were then more or less prominent in public life. Bondour informed him that an old Jesuit had been at Caughnawaga that day, that he had taken down the names of all the Praying Indians and was carrying the list to M. de Callière, governor of Canada. Schuyler was naturally curious to know how many names were on the list, because it had been commonly reported that there were at Caughnawaga only eighty Iroquois who had deserted the Five Nations. The merchant surprised him by asserting that he had secured three hundred and fifty names, and that this number would be increased to over four hundred before winter, that the Indians flocked "like wolves" there, begging the priests to take pity on them and enlighten them in the Christian faith. It afforded the citizen from Albany little consolation when Bondour added that the whole Five Nations would soon be at the mission of St. Francis Xavier, by reason alone of their ardent desire to turn Christian.

At Bondour's store Schuyler met a young Mohawk who informed him that he, too, desired to become a Christian. The pagan was promptly told that there was no need to come so far for that purpose, as the Indians would soon have ministers in their own country and he could be taught there. The merchant quickly took up the defence of the young Mohawk and replied "that *that* was no praying the Protestants used; the French alone had the right way of praying." Schuyler's controversial spirit was immediately

aroused. "Is it a good belief," he retorted, turning to the young Mohawk, "that, if one Indian kills another, the murderer shall go to the priest and he shall absolve him, when God commands that he who sheds blood his blood shall be shed?" This was too puzzling a mystery for the pagan Indian to solve, but he had the French merchant by his side, who regaled both Schuyler and the Indian with the following homely illustration: "If your shirt is foul, then you wash it and it becomes clean; so it is with anybody that goes to confession to the priest."

While this solution of the problem appeared to satisfy the Mohawk Indian, it had a contrary effect on Schuyler who, in a letter in which these details are preserved, humbly suggested to the Earl of Bellomont that, owing to the ardent desire of the Indians of the Five Nations to be instructed in the Christian faith, ministers should be sent to them as soon as possible so as to keep them in their own country. "The lack of ministers to instruct them," he wrote, "is the apparent cause of their every day going over more and more to the French, and it will be absolutely impossible to keep those Indians firm and steady to the covenant chain without such ministers. During the late war," he continued, "when France had but a few of our Indians and we the whole Five Nations, the French Indians made continual inroads into our Government in such manner and to such effect that our people on the frontiers were frequently killed or scalped or deserted."

Schuyler was persuaded that if the Five Nations, now friends of the English, were ever to become their enemies through lack of ministers to preach the Gospel to them, he hated to think what the results would be. In case of another war his Government would not be able to resist the French, and their Indian allies would overrun the English Provinces.

The pessimistic Schuyler had serious reasons for his apprehensions, for at that moment Governor de Callière was actually employed in his peace negotiations with all the Indian tribes. Six delegates from the cantons arrived in Montreal, in July, 1700, and asked to have a missionary sent them to transact the business, preferably Father Jean de Lamberville, "who knew better than anyone else how to promote friendship between the French and the Indians." But when they learned that De Lamberville had gone back to France, their choice fell on the Superior of Caughnawaga, who had spent many years among them. Bruyas had just returned from Boston, whither he had gone with M. de la Vallière, Major of Montreal, not merely to sound New England sentiment, but also to treat with the governor there for the release of French prisoners, and he was fully prepared for a similar mission to the Five Nations. The selection pleased De Callière, and Bruyas, accompanied by the interpreters Maricourt and Joncaire, started at once on their journey, with full powers to negotiate for the freedom of the French captives still held in the cantons and to



re-establish the peace which had been so violently interrupted by De Denonville in 1687.<sup>1</sup> The Jesuit and his two companions were enthusiastically received when they reached the end of their journey. They interviewed the prisoners, the majority of whom had been adopted, and were rather taken aback when several of them who had become accustomed to Indian life refused to accept their freedom.<sup>2</sup>

Dekanissorens, prompted by an emissary who was sent from Albany to give an account of the proceedings, felt some scruples about giving up the few prisoners who were anxious to return. "When we sachems go to Canada," he remarked angrily, "we do not trouble ourselves about prisoners, and you want us to meddle with them here." He yielded, however, with bad grace, and trusted that Father Bruyas would not fail to send back those of his nation who were still at Caughnawaga. Even if they followed the example of the French after their adoption, and were unwilling to return, he asked that those Indians should be bound, thrown into canoes and sent back to their own country. It was the old grievance; the Onondaga chief could not forgive the fugitives to the Canadian Praying Castle. The only reply Father Bruyas made to this pointed speech was that at the assembly which should soon be held in Montreal, the French governor would do with the Indian prisoners

1. *Doct. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 711.

2. FERLAND: *Histoire du Canada*, Vol. 1, p. 325.

as he had always done, and then even Dekanisorrens would be satisfied.<sup>1</sup>

The visit of the three ambassadors paved the way for an understanding between the French and the Indians. In September, 1700, a series of important conferences between De Callière and the various tribes resulted in a preliminary alliance, from which the governor hoped to effect a final and definite peace. It was only in the following year that treaty negotiations were completed. Kondiaronk, once the arch-enemy of the French, who had been converted by Father Etienne de Carheil, was spokesman for the thirty-eight tribes whose delegates attached their totems to the treaty parchment.<sup>2</sup> In his report of these proceedings to the Count de Pontchartrain, Governor de Callière gave credit to Father Jacques Bruyas for his success in having brought the Iroquois to see things in a reasonable light.

This declaration of peace naturally caused much apprehension among the English. Bello-mont dreaded Jesuit influence more than ever, and decided to put a stop to it. An Indian belonging to Caughnawaga, who had returned from Albany, informed Father Bruyas that the English

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IV, p. 895.

2. Kondiaronk—or *the Rat* as he was called by the French—always professed a high esteem for the missionary who had effected his conversion. According to him, there were only two intelligent men in New France, Count Frontenac and Father de Carheil. After an eloquent speech delivered before the assembled nations at Montreal, he became suddenly ill and expired, a few hours later, in the Hotel Dieu. He was interred in the parish church, and on his tomb were graven the simple words: *Ci-gît Le Rat, chef Huron*. His real name, according to Tanguay (*A Travers les Registres*, p. 90), was Gaspard Soiaga.

governor had resolved to arrest the Jesuit missionaries if they were found in the cantons,<sup>1</sup> for he intended to place ministers in their villages. He gave meanwhile a considerable number of presents to the Indians to keep them in good humour.

The Jesuits themselves, while welcoming the treaty, had little fear about any evil results which might ensue to religion, the only thing in which they were interested. The pressure that was being brought to bear on the cantons to receive Protestant ministers might tempt some of the villages to yield, but unless they were completely deprived of freedom in the choice of their religious leaders, the Jesuits were fully convinced that the Indians would prefer their black-robcs to Bello-mont's ministers of the Gospel.

When the English governor learned that the treaty of peace provided for the return of the Jesuits to the cantons, he sent a belt to the Onondagas forbidding them to receive Father Jacques de Lamberville, who was on his way thither. The Indians ignored the message and cordially welcomed the Jesuit. The interpreter Maricourt, who accompanied him, reported that while Dekanishorens held out, the other chiefs refused to be dictated to in the choice of a missionary. In a short time, the Frenchmen in Maricourt's party had a chapel and a cabin built for de Lamberville and his companion, Father Mareuil.

1. As the influence of the Jesuits gave to France its only power over the Five Nations, the legislature of New York, in 1700, made a law for hanging every Popish priest that should come voluntarily into the Province.—*Bancroft, Hist. U. S.*, Vol. II, p. 835.

The anger of Bellomont was aroused at this new attempt at what seemed to him to be an invasion of his rights, and he used every means to induce the Indians to violate the treaty. De Callière, on the other hand, praised them for the way they were observing it, and urged them to be faithful to its terms. It was a struggle typical of the time, based upon a desire to secure a permanent alliance with the Iroquois Confederacy, the French usually getting the better of the bargain.

In 1702, a finishing touch was put to the tension that existed, when de Callière informed de Pontchartrain that he would try to keep the Indians attached to him, and use them "to undertake something with more certainty against the English." De Callière had his sinister expedition against New York always in view, but he feared that if any such move were made without being entirely assured of the good will and co-operation of the Iroquois, those treacherous warriors, notwithstanding their treaty promises, would go over to the enemy. He knew that he could rely on the help of the Christian Indians living in the colony, but owing to lack of resources for so important an enterprise, nothing could be done as yet unless he were to send raiding parties to harass the rural districts of New England.



## CHAPTER V

### Dealings with the English

1700-1719

*The Attack on Deerfield—Affiliation of White Prisoners—The Legend of the Bell—Attachment of the Converts to the French—Spies visit Caughnawaga—Jesuit Activity in the cantons—Iroquois Sympathy over the Death of Louis XIV—Arrival of de Lauzon and Lafitau—Discovery of Ginseng. Lafitau visit to France—The Seigniorial Boundary Lines—A new Migration proposed and carried out.*

MOURNED by the entire colony, Chevalier Louis-Hector de Callière died in 1703, leaving behind him a legacy of peace with the Indian tribes. The work of carrying on a campaign against the English devolved upon the new governor, Philippe de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil, an officer not unknown to the native converts, for, shortly after his arrival in Canada, in 1687, he was stationed for a time at Fort Kahnawaké, at the head of a small garrison. He had taken part in several expeditions against the Indians with De Denonville and with Frontenac, and his knowledge of Indian life had taught him how to deal with the Iroquois, convert and pagan.

While the treaty bequeathed him by his predecessor was not as solid or as comprehensive as the interests of the colony required, he had orders from France to live in harmony, as long as possible, with the New York Government. All he had to do, therefore, was to bear in mind that the English were ever on the alert; and that if they started to give trouble, he had to be prepared to meet it. In an assembly, held in 1705, he exhorted the chiefs of the Onondagas to prevent the English from interfering; and to fulfil a promise he made to send them another black-robe, the aged and infirm Father Julien Garnier, of Caughnawaga, was sent to instruct them.

Vaudreuil was ready to live at peace with the English of New York, because New York was protected by a treaty with the Confederacy, but he made the Indian allies understand that his good will did not extend to the Government of Boston, for a reason which he himself gave de Pontchartrain: "Boston is not near enough to the Iroquois, and therefore not in a position to do the French very great harm."

The Abenakis were waging a deadly war against the people of New England on account of their encroachments; they would not listen to any compromise; and Vaudreuil, taking a hint thrown out from the Court of Versailles, wished to make those Eastern Indians realize that they could count upon the co-operation of the French. "If you yourself could go to attack the enemy

in Boston," said the minister, "His Majesty would be well pleased." <sup>1</sup>

It was in pursuance of this policy that Massachusetts and New Hampshire began to feel the effects of French resentment, for in February, 1704, the first serious raid was made at Deerfield, Massachusetts. In the dead of a winter's night, a detachment of French commanded by Hertel de Rouville, aided by Abenakis and Caughnawaga Indians, attacked this little village on the Connecticut river. They burned nearly all the homes, and killed or carried into captivity a number of prisoners.

French and English versions differ greatly as to the damage done during this expedition. Colonel Quary, writing to the Lords of Trade in London, <sup>2</sup> informed them that a party of about three hundred Indians, headed by about twenty or thirty French, cut off Deerfield, killed fifty-two of the inhabitants and carried away eighty prisoners, while the invaders had fifty of their number killed during the action. On the other hand, De Vaudreuil wrote that he was obliged to send thither Sieur de Rouville, <sup>3</sup> with nearly two hundred men, to attack a fort in which, according to the report of the prisoners, there were more than one hundred men under arms. De Rouville brought back over a hundred prisoners, men, women, and children, who, when they reached Canada, according to

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 805.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 1083.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 762.

the historian of the raid, a grandson of one of them, were treated with kindness by the French, especially by De Vaudreuil. Most of the prisoners were ransomed from the Indians by the missionaries, who placed the young girls in the Ursuline convents of Three Rivers and Quebec.

This expedition has always had a special interest for Caughnawaga, not merely because its warriors had their share in it, but also because there are Indians still living in that historic village who trace their origin to prisoners taken in the raid. Among those seized by De Rouville's soldiers were the Reverend John Williams, pastor of Deerfield, and his family. On the way to Canada the wife succumbed, owing to the hardships she had to endure, but the minister and his children reached the colony safely and were well treated during their detention. Two years later, when they were granted their liberty, Eunice, one of the daughters, having become a convert to the Catholic faith, refused to return to Deerfield with her father. This in itself was a tragic ending, but the tragedy would have been less poignant to her Puritan relatives and friends were her soul not now in imminent danger. "The loss of Eunice and her adoption of Romanism were calamities from which her afflicted father never recovered," writes Hanson. "Day and night, in public and in private, she was the object of his prayers. Her conversion to the simple faith of her ancestors became the personal desire of the whole community of Deerfield. Those who are acquainted



with New England life can easily understand how it was fanned into an hereditary flame by prayer-meetings and sermons, and only glowed more intensely as the lapse of time rendered its accomplishment more hopeless." Hopeless, in all truth, for Eunice afterwards married one of the Indians of Caughnawaga, where over a hundred of her descendants are still to be found.<sup>1</sup>

The case of Eunice Williams is not unique in the early history of the colony. Captives seized in raids on the English settlements and carried off to Canada were usually well taken care of. After a time many of them lost the use of their mother tongue and became French or Indian, both in style and language. The children were placed in religious institutions and were reared in a Christian manner; their elders embraced Catholicism, and sometimes received letters of naturalization from the King of France. If their identity has in many cases been lost, it must be attributed to the incompleteness of baptismal registration or to the inability of both civil and religious officials to write English names correctly. For instance, in the registers an English name like *Willet* became *Ouellette*, *Riseing* was changed to

1. "The father of Eunice died in 1729, but after his death the desire for her conversion continued as unabated as ever. Before his decease she had once visited Deerfield and consented to appear in the meeting-house in English dress, but in the afternoon she resumed her blanket, and ever afterwards continued inflexible in her attachment to the dress, customs and religion in which she had been educated. She visited Deerfield in 1740, and again in 1741. These visits caused great hope and excitement among her friends, and efforts were again made for her recovery; but she died as she had lived."

—HANSON: *The Lost Prince*, p. 181.

*Raizenne, Corse to Casse, and Hinsdell to Isdein.*<sup>1</sup> In the old registers of Caughnawaga may be seen the records of the baptism of whites, but the family names of those persons are not given. Their origin is indicated by such descriptions as "baptized by the English", "baptized conditionally", or "prisoner of war." A former missionary of the village, the Right Reverend William Forbes, D.D., now Bishop of Joliette, whose study of the origin of the Indian families of Caughnawaga, as will be seen in another chapter, extended over fifteen years of residence there, succeeded in discovering the family names of a number of former captives by comparing the documents at his disposal with the traditions of the village. He became convinced that it was owing to the reception of captives from the English colonies into the tribe, after hostile raids in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that Indians at Caughnawaga still retain names like Rice, Tarbell, McGregor, Hill, Williams, Jacobs, and Stacey. The first persons bearing those names were brought to the village as prisoners of war, and yielding to the influence of their surroundings they became both Catholic and Iroquois. Once adopted by the tribe, they enjoyed all the privileges of membership, some of them even being elected to offices of responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Tradition has it that De Rouville's Indians brought back with them from Deerfield a church

1. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. IV, p. 354.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, pp. 116-117.

bell which had been captured by the English, but which, strange to say, belonged rightfully to Caughnawaga. The story runs that the converts of the village had for a long time wished to possess a church bell and had ordered one from France. It was sent out on a French vessel, *Le Grand Monarque*, which, while on its way to Canada, was seized by an English cruiser and taken to Salem, Massachusetts, where the cargo was sold as a war-prize. The bell was bought for Deerfield and placed in the steeple of the church of which the Reverend John Williams was then the pastor. After the raid it was taken down, attached to a pole with an iron bar at each end so that it could be easily carried on the shoulders of the Indians, and in that way was brought to Caughnawaga.

This is an outline of the well-known tradition of the bell which still hangs in the steeple of the village church, but there are a few historical inaccuracies which must be verified before the story can be accepted in its entirety. In the first place, Father Nicolas, the Jesuit who is supposed to have accompanied the De Rouville expedition in 1704, and whose name is attached to the legend, was then engaged in missionary work among the Ottawa tribe in the Far West; secondly, the emphasis which the tradition places on the novelty of a bell at Caughnawaga does not tally with the history of the mission, for the reason that the sound of bells was a very familiar one to the Christian converts from the first years of its foundation. The Bishop of Quebec was received at Laprairie

in 1675 with the joyous sound of bells, and we have already seen that in 1683 there were three in the steeple of the church which was blown down in the gale at Kahnawaké.

As in all legends a grain of truth may be found, it is quite possible that the eight-hundred-pound bell which still calls the Indians to prayer at Caughnawaga may have been brought from France for another of the Christian missions, although there is no mark left to indicate either its place of origin or its destination. It may have been seized by the English at sea and taken to New England, an event not improbable in the strenuous years of the early part of the eighteenth century. When the bell was cast, an inscription ran around the upper rim, but close examination reveals the work of vandals, as only a letter here and there can be deciphered. Where and when the inscription was chiselled off the bronze are questions which will always be difficult to answer. It would seem, however, that this act of vandalism could only have been perpetrated by persons interested in concealing the name of the original owner.

The Deerfield incident had a disheartening effect on the Boston Government. "We must expect frequent misfortunes of this nature in one province or another," wrote Colonel Quarry to the Lords of Trade, "when it pleases the enemy to fall on us, nor is there any effective way to prevent their mischief except by cutting off Canada, which might be done with ease if Her Majesty would



resolve on it." The English admitted, however, that the raid was disastrous simply because the people of Deerfield themselves, though they had been warned that the French were preparing to attack them, had not kept guard as carefully as they should have done. At any rate, as De Vaudreuil remarked, the capture of the place was a proof that the Abenakis could rely on the promises and the co-operation of the French.

Under such raids as this the people of New England were growing desperate, and were calling loudly for some sort of retaliation. Joseph Dudley, Governor of Boston, turned to Lord Lovelace, the new Governor of New York, and asked him to use his authority to induce the Iroquois to declare war against the French. When this news reached De Vaudreuil, he sent the interpreter Joncaire to the Onondagas to remind them of their treaty obligations with his predecessor, De Callière, and to persuade them to remain neutral. It was not in their interest to take part in any war between the English and the French.

A French interpreter's first visit, as was usually the case, would have been to the Jesuit residing in the canton, but before Joncaire could reach the mission, an English agent, Abraham Schuyler, had gone to see Father Jacques de Lamberville for the purpose of expressing his deep regret at the serious turn things were taking, and of advising him to go to Canada to give an account of what was passing. Failing to perceive the snare that had been set for him, and leaving his companion, Father

Mareuil, behind him, De Lamberville departed for Montreal. He was hardly out of sight when the agent came to tell Mareuil that his life was now in danger, and that the only way he could escape was to accompany him to Albany. Schuyler then caused the chapel and the cabin of the Onondaga missionaries to be pillaged and burned to the ground.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile two Mohawk spies, Wagrasshse and Canawangoe, had been sent to Canada, under the guise of fur traders, to report on the condition of things there.<sup>2</sup> They kept their eyes wide open during their visit to Montreal, Chambly, Laprairie and Caughnawaga, and took time to examine the military strength of each of those places. In Montreal they found two small cannon in front of the governor's residence and eight larger ones on the water-front, two of which were mounted; the stockades around the town were falling into decay; they saw many officers, but few private soldiers. At Laprairie some parts of the fort had been renewed; the other parts were old and rotten. In Fort Chambly, which was manned by a garrison of thirty soldiers, there were two large guns and three *patarrones*.<sup>3</sup> The fort at Caughnawaga was old and its stockades were small.

These two spies did not go to Quebec, having learned that Quebec was well fortified with a

1. Father Mareuil was afterwards liberated and sent back to Canada in exchange for a nephew of Peter Schuyler.—*Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 856.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. V, p. 85.

3. A sort of small cannon easily moved from place to place.

thick stone wall, but they met De Vaudreuil, the governor. "We were at Caughnawaga on our return home," they told the commissioners after they reached Albany in June, 1709,<sup>1</sup> "and just as we were starting out, in came the Governor of Quebec, who desired a meeting with us and all our Indians that were there; and being convened he asked us if we were going home. We answered, 'Yes.' 'Then,' said he, 'let us drink together,' and he gave every man of us a dram of brandy and a small roll of tobacco. He said that he was informed that the hatchet had been given into the hands of the Five Nations, and he expected the first blow from the Governor of New York. But then he should know how to deal with him; 'for it is an easy matter,' said he, 'to take Albany; and as for you, children, do what you think fit; fight or not, just as you please.'" Another spy reported that he had seen forty Mohawks from Caughnawaga and other Indians at Fort Chambly, the stockades of which were all rotten and propped up with pieces of timber, affording poor support for the six large guns which were mounted therein. This spy went to Sorel, where the priest bade him welcome, but soon perceiving the rôle his dusky visitor was playing, put a sudden stop to his investigations. Another Indian spy reported the departure from Canada of one hundred and eighty men, forty of whom were whites and the rest Indians, who were to break up into skulking

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. V, p. 85.

parties when they reached New England, and work havoc among the inhabitants there.

While the English were keeping Mohawk spies busy among the French, the French were also seeking information about the strength of the enemy. An Indian spy named Arousent, just back from Albany, brought the ominous news, were it true, that the English were encamped along the Hudson and were ready to advance against Montreal. The Mohawks ordered him to inform their Caughnawaga brethren that the hatchet had been placed in their hands by the English, and while it did not give them any pleasure to take it up, seeing that it was a violation of their treaty with De Callière, they did not dare refuse it, considering the large military force the governors of the English Provinces could get together. Arousent was told to advise his friends at Caughnawaga that the French could never resist the English army, and that there was still time for the Christian Indians to make their choice and remain neutral. If they did not do so, they need not expect any mercy in the war which was about to begin; in fact, they might consider themselves dead men.

The chiefs of the Caughnawagas quickly imparted this information to De Vaudreuil, as well as the message they had given Arousent to take back to the Mohawks, thanking those tribesmen for the belt and sharing in their regret that the Mohawk canton had to take up the hatchet against the French. If that were their present position



they were in a bad business, indeed; they should try to disengage themselves from it and observe the neutrality which they, too, had promised De Callière to observe faithfully. As for the Caughnawaga warriors themselves, they were resolved to live and die with their Father Onontio; the threats of the English did not frighten them; they knew by experience that the French had always been victorious; they hoped that such would be the case now; but so long as they were under Onontio's wing they feared nothing. Arousent could go back and tell the warriors of the Mohawk canton that Quebec and Montreal were well fortified, that there was a garrison stationed at Chambly awaiting the coming of the English, and that if the Mohawks were wise they would remember that the English had abandoned them in the last war and would do so again as soon as peace had been declared in Europe.

The Marquis de Vaudreuil, in his correspondence with the French Court during the following three years, made frequent mention of the activities of his Christian Indians. An Indian spy, whom he had sent from Caughnawaga to Albany to obtain further news from that quarter, brought back the report that as soon as Robert Hunter, the governor who had succeeded Lord Lovelace, had arrived in New York in 1710, he went to Albany and assembled the Five Nations for a love-feast. He then ordered them to receive no more French agents in their villages, as no confidence could be placed in the French; for to preserve

their country it was necessary for both English and Indians to keep on their guard. Hunter did not wish to give them the hatchet openly—he was merely disposing them to receive it. He despatched a messenger with a secret belt to Caughnawaga, urging the Indians there to pledge themselves not to commit hostilities against New England. The Governor of Montreal, *Sieur de Ramezay*, sent the belt to the *Marquis de Vaudreuil*, who replied to its message himself. He told Hunter plainly that it was useless to invite the Caughnawaga Indians to Albany or elsewhere, as they would do nothing without informing him, for they were his children and were consequently bound to him by the ties of common interests; nor would they lay down their hatchets against New England until the French had decided to lay down theirs.

All this manœuvring gives a vivid insight into the seething and unsettled state of affairs in the two colonies during the first years of the eighteenth century. Officially, it was the material interests and the service of the respective sovereigns of France and England which were involved; at bottom, it was the fur trade and its vulgar profits which occasioned all the bickering and strife. English and French were pitted against each other in suing for Iroquois neutrality, seeing that they could not secure Iroquois co-operation in the open, neither side daring to yield an inch lest some advantage should accrue to the other. Feints and counter-feints, threats, promises, wire-pulling,

flattery — every art was brought into play to gain a point, all with a view to capturing the good will of the pagan Iroquois, for whom the most solemn treaties were simply scraps of paper.

These Indians were willing to keep the peace and to trade with both French and English, but they asserted their independence of both, and would continue to assert it for many years to come. Forty years later, a delegation of the Six Nations told the Count de Galissonière that there was a time when neither French nor English inhabited this continent. From heaven they had received their lands; they had never ceded them to anyone and never would.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the independent and haughty red men were complacently waiting for the best terms.

Vaudreuil was either throwing dust into Governor Hunter's eyes or he himself was being deceived if he thought his Indians were going to fight against their own countrymen. The constant intercourse that had been kept up between the cantons and Caughnawaga had renewed Indian friendships, which neither the commercial nor the political interests of the French or of the English could break, and the expedition undertaken against Haverhill, Massachusetts, in 1708, once again taught the French governor how little faith could be placed in Indian promises of loyalty.

Chiefs and warriors in the colony were ordered to assist the French troops in this raid, but when the Caughnawaga contingent had reached Lake

1. *Canadian Archives; Corr. Gen.*, Vol. 92, p. 131.

Champlain they refused to advance further, giving as a pretext the existence of sickness which had broken out among them and which might spread to the rest of the army. The real reason came to the surface later in a letter written by Schuyler, commandant of Albany, to Governor Dudley of Boston, assuring him that the Christian Iroquois had promised that they would no longer wage war against the English or their Iroquois allies. The Caughnawagas were humiliated when their double-dealing leaked out,<sup>1</sup> but Vaudreuil only mildly reproached them for their cowardice. If they were so fond of peace, they could go home and sleep on their mats.

The capture of Port Royal, in 1711, and the report that the English were about to proceed against Quebec and Montreal by land and by water, had a thrilling, if temporary, effect on the Indian allies of the French in the colony. When the appeal was made for recruits to resist, the Indians of Sault-au-Recollet and Caughnawaga shouldered their guns. No one could tell whether they were sincere or not, but at all events they responded to the call with shouts of joy.

The news that Sir Hovenden Walker<sup>2</sup> was sailing up the Lower St. Lawrence with a hostile fleet, and the still more ominous news that General Nicholson was stationed with two thousand men at the head of Lake Champlain, ready to advance northward, caused all the warriors to proceed

1. CHARLEVOIX: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 328.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 861.



immediately to Fort Chambly, where they awaited developments. Nothing came of the threatened invasions. The disaster which overtook Walker's fleet and the retreat of Nicholson's army, after he had destroyed his supplies, left the Indians free to return to their villages, satisfied with the results of their outing.

The treaty of Utrecht closed the war between the French and the English, and the Iroquois Confederacy, which now included the Tuscaroras, were acknowledged by the treaty makers to be subject to the British crown. It was hoped then that a touch of finality had been given to the status of the native tribes in the New York province; and that an end had come at last to the troubles which had kept the two colonies on edge for so many years. But the diplomats of Europe had not reckoned with the independent red men of America, who acknowledged the sovereignty of French or English only when it suited them. The Iroquois were at home in the cantons where their forefathers had lived long before Europeans had set foot there; they recognized no one's right to their territory or to their allegiance except in so far as they themselves were willing to make concessions. And yet, historians acknowledge that the French could always make better terms with them than the English. The constant presence among them of French missionaries, whose system of dealing with them was far more paternal and more efficacious than that of the ministers; the activity of interpreters devoted to French interests

living in the cantons; and, finally, the religious teaching which emanated from Caughnawaga and the other Canadian missions, exerted a powerful influence upon the Iroquois; and while it did not lessen their love of independence, it swayed them in favour of the French.

The peace of Utrecht left its impress on the whites of both colonies, but the effect of its stipulations was not noticeable among the pagan Iroquois, who still claimed the privilege of stirring up trouble whenever they pleased. In the winter of 1717, certain Caughnawaga converts informed *Sieur de Ramezay* of a pretended discovery they had made in Albany—nothing less than a hostile expedition against the colony by the Iroquois, who were due to arrive in the month of June. It was a false alarm, but it caused uneasiness to everybody except *Governor de Vaudreuil*. *Joncaire*, the faithful interpreter, was still in the cantons; he spent his time going from one to the other; he was a close observer, and would warn the French governor if any such plot were under way.

It was *Joncaire* who accompanied the chiefs of the Iroquois tribes to Montreal in the summer of 1717, when they came to condole with *de Vaudreuil*, Indian fashion, over the death of *Louis XIV*, who had passed away two years previously. Forty warriors performed the ceremonies usual on such occasions, and having concluded their lugubrious chants, the chief of the Onondagas told the governor general that the whole Iroquois nation was deeply affected by the death of the great French

king. They invited De Longueuil and De la Chauvinerie, whom they had already adopted, to return to their villages with Joncaire, and live with them as long as they wished to do so. They were fully aware, they added, that this action would not please the English, but they were masters in their own country, and so they intended to remain. They asked the governor to transmit a belt to the young King of France, Louis XIV's successor, imploring him to take them under his protection and to use the strength of his arm to defend them against any attempts that might be made against them. The Onondaga chief asked the same favour for his brethren at Caughnawaga and for the other nations allied to them. This conference, held four years after the passing of the treaty of Utrecht, revealed the sentiments of the Indians towards the French, and proved that the English overlordship stipulated by the treaty was not weighing very heavily upon them.

A year later, in October, 1718, five Onondaga chiefs arrived in Montreal to receive the answer of the young King of France to their message of the previous year. This was a very puzzling moment for De Vaudreuil, who could only reply that while the belt had been sent to Versailles, he had not yet received the proper answer. The Governor of Canada learned when it was too late that he had made a false step in communicating the condolence of the Indians. France was determined to stand by the terms of the treaty of Utrecht, and the belt coming from the tribes who

were now recognized as the subjects of another king, and carrying the message it did, was not so welcome a gift as De Vaudreuil had surmised. "I should not have thought of sending the belt the Five Nations gave me in 1717 for His Majesty," he wrote, October 28, 1719, "had it not been presented on the occasion of his happy accession to the throne. I shall, therefore, obey the order of the Council not to send such belts any more."<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that the period from 1712 to 1720 was peaceful at the mission of St. Francis Xavier. While other tribes were restless, notably the Abenakis, who were still defending their possessions along the Atlantic, there is nothing in the early documents to indicate that the Caughnawaga Indians were mixed up in raids or hostile expeditions. The spiritual work, however, went on with unabated vigour in the village. All the Jesuits who made their headquarters at Caughnawaga were not usually employed there. New missionaries appear whose movements are difficult to follow. They were often absent on journeys to the Onondagas, to the Senecas, and elsewhere. Caughnawaga, with no parish west of it, was at the end of the world in those days. Only an occasional farmer had begun to break the ground in what is now Chateaugay. In a decree issued by the Sovereign Council, March 3, 1722, fixing the limits of the parishes in the colony, Chateaugay is numbered among the crown lands. "Not being numerous enough to establish a parish of

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 894.



their own," this decree declared, "the people living there will be served by the Iroquois missionary living at Sault St. Louis."<sup>1</sup>

In 1699, Father Jacques Bruyas—*Achiendasé*<sup>2</sup>—resumed his old post as superior of the mission, replacing Cholenec, who had been transferred to Montreal. From 1698 to 1704 Father Milet was at Caughnawaga, his companions were Pierre de Lagrené and Julien Garnier, and Vaillant de Guélis, who returned to the village after an absence of twenty-five years.

Father Jacques de Lamberville died at Sault St. Louis, on April 18th, 1711, in the odour of sanctity, according to Cholenec, after thirty-seven years of missionary life.<sup>3</sup> He was followed to the grave on June 15, 1712, by Bruyas, who was buried among the Iroquois after he had served them for forty-six years. The loss of this Jesuit was a severe one for the village and for the colony. His perfect knowledge of the Iroquois tongue gave him an influence over those Indians rarely attained by his fellow-missionaries, for few men in Canada did more than this veteran to keep the restless tribes at peace with the French. His writings are monuments of his assiduity and zeal. Notwithstanding constant travel, the embassies undertaken and the exigencies of his ministry,

1. *Arrêts et Ordonnances Royales*, Quebec, 1853, Vol. I, p. 462.

2. The Mohawks would write: *Asennase*, i.e., *a new name* (Forbes).

3. Jacques de Lamberville was born in Rouen in 1641, entered the Jesuit Order in 1661, and reached Canada in 1675.

he found time to complete an Iroquois grammar<sup>1</sup> and similar works for the use of his brethren among the tribes. Father Julien Garnier, an old man of seventy, retired from active service to prepare for his death, which took place only in 1730, sixty-two years after his ordination.

Bruyas was succeeded by Father Pierre Cholenec, who had as his assistants Etienne Lauverjat and Joseph Lafitau, both young Jesuits who had recently arrived from France. It was during his second term of office that Cholenec employed his spare moments in writing the life of Kateri Tekakwitha. He also wrote a sketch of the saintly maiden in classical Latin, giving details of her life not included in his French work. This Latin version, dated from Sault St. Louis, September 26, 1715, was dedicated to Michelangelo Tamburini, General of the Jesuits, in Rome.

Another arrival at the mission who was destined to acquire an ascendancy over the Indians, in the coming years, was Father Pierre de Lauzon.<sup>2</sup> Born at Poitiers, in 1687, he entered the Jesuit Order in 1703, and reached Canada in 1716. He was first stationed at Lorette, where he began to study the Indian languages. In 1718, he was sent to Caughnawaga. He laboured there for three years, and was so beloved by the Indians that, after leaving to teach hydrography in the college

1. Bruyas' Mohawk Grammar, *Radices Verborum Iroquennorum*—the oldest known to exist, was published by the regents of the University of New York in their Sixteenth Annual Report of State Cabinet (Albany, 1863), pp. 3-123.

2. After his affiliation into the tribe he was known to the Indians by the name of *Ganonrontie*.

of Quebec, the converts petitioned his superior and the governor, asking that he be sent back to them.<sup>1</sup> The petition was granted, and after an absence of a year, De Lauzon returned to the village, where he exercised his ministry for ten years, when he was appointed Superior General of the missions of his Order in Canada.

Perhaps the most outstanding figure among the Jesuits at Caughnawaga during that period is Joseph François Lafitau, who arrived from France in 1712 or 1713.<sup>2</sup> This learned man was born at Bordeaux in 1681, entered the Order before he was seventeen, completed his studies, and then started for Canada. He was immediately sent to Caughnawaga, where Indian life, with its charms and its rude poetry, was destined to make a deep impression on the young and cultured son of France. The whooping of the warriors, the continual alarms, the blowing of trumpets, always loud and strident, the St. Lawrence tumbling over the rocks just outside the stockade, the little white

1. A letter in the Canadian Archives (C. 11, 106) states that de Lauzon, who had been withdrawn on account of health, was sent back to Sault St. Louis at the solicitation of Vaudreuil and Bégon just at a time when his presence was badly needed there.

2. Joseph François Lafitau spent five years in the Caughnawaga mission. He went to France in 1717, and in the following year appeared his treatise on the ginseng plant. The title of this treatise is *Mémoire présenté à son Altesse Royale, M. le Duc d'Orléans, régent du royaume de France; concernant la précieuse plante du Ginseng de Tartarie, découverte en Canada par le P. Joseph François Lafitau, Missionnaire des Iroquois du Sault St-Louis*, 8vo, 88 pp. with a plate representing the plant. In 1723 he published his elaborate work entitled *Mœurs des sauvages Américains comparées aux Mœurs des premiers temps*. Paris, 2 volumes, 4to, 41 plates. This work was reprinted the following year at Rouen, in four volumes, duodecimo. In 1733 was published his work on the discoveries and conquests of the Portuguese in Asia and Africa, under the inappropriate title, however, of *Histoire des Découvertes et Conquêtes des Portugais dans le Nouveau Monde*. Paris, 2 vols., 4to, plates; also 4 vols. 12mo. Father Lafitau died in France in 1740.

farm-houses and the shining steeples peeping over the trees across the river, all new and strange, appealed to the imagination of the young Jesuit.

Father Lafitau, first of all, was a student, and immediately began to acquire a knowledge of the Indians. In his great work, *Les Mœurs des Sauvages Américains*, he wrote: "During the five years I spent in an Indian mission of Canada, I wished to get a solid knowledge of the character and customs of these peoples, and while I profited greatly by the lights and knowledge of an old Jesuit missionary, Father Julien Garnier, I was not satisfied with simply studying the character of the savages and informing myself of their customs and practices, but I also sought to find among them some traces of antiquity." Lafitau's volume contains a wealth of detail concerning the manners, customs and religion of the American Indians, particularly of the Iroquois, with whom he became more familiar. His parallel between the people of antiquity and those of America has been considered as very ingenious, wrote Charlevoix, for it presupposed a great knowledge of ancient history. Though his work is overlaid with a theory of the Tataric origin of the red race, Lafitau continues to hold high rank as an original authority. Parkman calls him the most satisfactory of the elder writers.<sup>1</sup>

In 1716, while occupied in gathering material for this work, at a moment when he least expected it, he discovered, a few steps from the mission-

1. WINSOR: *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Vol. IV, pp. 298-299



aries' cabin, the celebrated ginseng plant,<sup>1</sup> then so much talked about and so much sought after in the medical world. Ginseng was recognized as a universal remedy in China, where it was worth its weight in silver, "and the discovery of it in Canada created as great a sensation and excited as much cupidity," remarked Father Burtin, writing over half a century ago, "as the discovery of gold does to-day in California, Australia, or New Caledonia." Lafitau published the details of his discovery in a memoir which he dedicated to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France.

As soon as the value of the plant became known, the French and the Indians began to cultivate it on a large scale. The Indians scoured the forests for it, even going as far as Massachusetts in search of it. The ginseng trade soon assumed serious proportions, exportation in one year to China alone amounting to half a million francs. But the high prices commanded by the plant excited the cupidity of speculators, and eventually ruined the business. The planters began to gather it in May instead of in September; they then dried it artificially in ovens, instead of allowing it to dry slowly in the shade. By this treatment it lost so many of its curative properties that it became worthless in the eyes of the Chinese, who ultimately refused to buy. In 1755, the exportation of ginseng only amounted to thirty-three thousand francs, and in a few years a trade which promised

1. Called by the Iroquois *garenloguen*, and by Lafitau, who discovered it, *Aureliana canadensis*, undoubtedly in honor of the Duc d'Orleans to whom he presented his *Memoire*.

in the beginning to be a source of wealth to the French colony had ceased to exist.

Lafitau was also the author of one of the most vigorous pleas ever written against the liquor traffic in Canada. In a letter to Versailles he described the ravages caused by brandy among the pagan and Christian Indians. Even at Caughnawaga he had been assured that the converts, who came to settle there in the hope of avoiding contamination, left the mission when they found that "drink and drunkenness were as common there as in their own country." Disunion of families, debauchery, abandoned homes, followed in the train of the traffic. This sturdy moralist proved that the sale of brandy was detrimental to the welfare of Indian, of colonist, and of fur trader, and that it would end by alienating the tribes from the French. Lafitau's strong plea had the effect he desired. Upheld by similar protests sent by De Vaudreuil, Bégon, and De Ramezay, a note came from Versailles prohibiting, after one year, the further issue of liquor permits to people trading with the Indians.

In 1716, the question uppermost in the minds of both missionaries and converts was the transfer of the village from the shore opposite Devil's Island to another site. During the previous year Cholenec had notified the Marquis de Vaudreuil that a change must soon be made, for his Indians could not remain much longer where they were. They had been cultivating the same soil for twenty years, and, owing to their crude methods, it had

become less fertile. The yearly supply of corn was dwindling; the forests were gradually disappearing; the trees were now far away and winter firewood was difficult to procure; in a word, the converts of Caughnawaga and their families were feeling the pinch of poverty. This news did not take long to travel to Albany and the cantons, and pressing invitations were renewed to draw them back to the Mohawk villages. Both the English and the Iroquois were anxious to see them return; the only way the French could hold them was to provide funds out of the public treasury to transfer them elsewhere on their seignior, where they could live in greater ease in their own Indian fashion. Intendant Bégon estimated that two thousand francs would cover the cost of clearing two acres on a new site, building a chapel and residence for the missionaries, and even planting the stockades necessary to protect the village. Pending instructions from France, the governor advanced 450 francs for the purpose, as it was absolutely necessary to begin work in order to induce the Indians not to return to the cantons.<sup>1</sup>

There was, however, a special feature connected with the removal of the mission further west which deserved consideration before a final decision was arrived at. The Indians, who were better hunters than farmers, had so far cultivated only the eastern end of their seignior of Sault St. Louis. It would seem that this portion had absorbed all their energies, for the land adjoining

1. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXVII, p. 27.

Chateauguay, although granted by Intendant Duchesneau only five months after the original grant made in 1680, had not yet been registered in Quebec.<sup>1</sup> Circumstances, over which they had no control, were about to oblige the Jesuits to abandon the portion of the seigniorship which they had superintended since 1680. For the long period of thirty-seven years, during which they had charge of the temporal and spiritual interests of the mission of Caughnawaga, they had the worry of caring for eight or nine hundred improvident Indians, including the aged and the infirm, not to mention the multitude of strangers who were continually coming and going. For all this work the annual grant to the mission from the King of France had only been five hundred francs, a sum far too paltry even for its pressing needs. The concession forced from Frontenac in 1680 contained a clause which stipulated that if the missionaries and Indians ever abandoned the land they had been living on, it should be handed back all cleared—*toute defrichée*—to the king. Owing to the activity of the Jesuits in directing their converts for nearly forty years, all the eastern portion of the seigniorship bordering on Laprairie was now free from forest; it was ready for cultivation by hands more skilful than the Indians', and it would be easy to find French colonists to occupy the entire tract. The missionaries had never drawn any profit from it for their own labours; on the contrary, owing to

1. This second concession was registered in the office of the Sovereign Council, Quebec, Oct. 2, 1719.



the parsimony of the crown, they had to incur indebtedness. They had now legitimate reasons for abandoning this end of the seigniory, and if the cleared portion of it must be handed back to the king, their long years of labour would be lost. This seemed unfair to the Jesuits, who wished to retain possession of their land and, if permitted by the Crown, to place French colonists on it for the benefit of their mission.

In 1717, Governor de Vaudreuil was consulted on the matter by the civil authorities. His sense of fairness was keen, and he held that it would be an injustice to deprive the Jesuits of any part of their seigniory at Sault St. Louis simply because they were going with their Indians to live on other portions of it. The expenses they had incurred, during nearly forty years of possession, were so great that in his opinion they should be granted a title to the entire property in perpetuity, cleared and uncleared, for themselves and their Indians. Besides, they were about to incur additional expenses in building a church and residence on the new site to which they were soon to migrate. De Vaudreuil even urged the Regent's Council not to put the missionaries to this new expense, seeing that the revenue received from the Crown had never been more than five hundred livres for the four missionaries who lived and laboured at Sault St. Louis.

The last word had not been spoken on this important matter. At a moment when their mission of St. Francis Xavier had so much at



REV. JOSEPH-FRANÇOIS LAFITAU, S.J.



stake, and when the restrictive clause in the deed of 1680 placed them in danger of losing the fruit of their long years of occupation, the Jesuits saw the opportuneness of having friends at court; and just as Fremin had been sent to plead their cause for the same land in 1679, so was Lafitau sent on a similar errand in 1717; or, as the historian de Rochemonteix puts it, "to treat with the French Court about the mission of New France."<sup>1</sup>

The envoy himself, in a letter to the General of his Order, Michelangelo Tamburini,<sup>2</sup> informed him that he had been sent by his brethren in Canada to interest the Comte de Toulouse and other powerful friends in his projects. He completed negotiations for the transfer of the village to the spot where it stands to-day, the land being better and the site being more convenient, requesting at the same time that the title to the portion of the seigniority they were about to quit be left with the Jesuits for the Indians, to prevent others from taking possession of it.

The Paris archives inform us that Father Lafitau presented his petition to the Court on February 8, 1718.<sup>3</sup> He represented that the Indians were moving to their new village further up the river front on land adjoining the seigniority—the second gift from Duchesneau in 1680—and were only quitting their old land for a time, and that in the interval the Jesuits would continue

1. *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France*, Vol. III, p. 385.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 386.

3. Canadian Archives: Corresp. C., II, Vol. 106.



to cultivate it. If he sought a title to the seigniorship in perpetuity it was less in their own interests than in those of the mission and the Indians, or as Lafitau put it, they wished *de faire valoir cette terre au profit de leur mission*.

This petition was graciously received. A decree of the Regent's Council united the two grants of land made in 1680 into one seigniorship, and thereby forestalled any attempt that might be made in the future to deprive the mission of Sault St. Louis of the fruits of thirty-seven years of labour. The council at first considered that it would be necessary to issue a new deed of concession to the Jesuits conjointly with the Indians; but apparently, on second thought, and with the explanations which Lafitau gave them, they were satisfied that the original deed would suffice. The conditions remaining unchanged, the document issued in 1680 met the requirements of the moment, and there was no need to issue a new parchment. The council, however, took the precaution to assert that the title to the seigniorship would not be granted in perpetuity.

There was a second difficulty clamouring for settlement in connection with this land, and Lafitau undertook to settle it also while he was in France. No official boundaries had ever been fixed between the seigniorship of La Prairie de la Magdelaine, granted outright to the Jesuits by Sieur de Lauzon in 1647, and the seigniorship at Sault St. Louis, granted to the Jesuits for their Indians by Frontenac and Duchesneau on May 29, 1680. The

title-deed to the former territory mentioned a frontage of *about* two leagues along the river St. Lawrence, but this indefinite language, so usual in old French measurements, made the width of two leagues, "or thereabouts," a very uncertain quantity, and up to 1717 the limits between the two seigniories had only been approximately maintained.

A strip of land measuring thirty-seven acres wide and extending the whole depth of the seigniority of Laprairie—that is, a distance of four leagues from the river to the rear line—was claimed by the Jesuits as part of Laprairie. It was theirs by right of occupation and prescription; they had built a mill on it; they had made grants out of it to colonists; they had never had any doubt about their legal right to proprietorship. Although no documents are available to show how Lafitau's petition was received, he evidently maintained this point while at Versailles in 1718. A boundary line must have been finally established, and the strip thirty-seven acres wide must have been admitted by the Regent's Council as belonging to Laprairie, for we find that grants of portions of it dating back as far as 1722—that is, barely four years later—had been ceded by the Jesuits as seigneurs of Laprairie to white colonists and ratified by the Government on the same conditions as those imposed on their other tenants.

In the famous lawsuit of 1762, which challenged their title to ownership, Father Bernard Well, the procurator of the seigniority at Laprairie, tes-

tified before the Military Council of Montreal that during a period of forty years—that is, practically from the time of Lafitau's journey to France until the Conquest in 1760—all the governors and intendants of the old *régime* had recognized and ratified the grants made to French colonists out of the disputed strip. As we shall see later on, this strip became, in the end, a sort of "no man's land," and was the occasion of interesting legal struggles, not only between the Jesuits and the Indians after the Conquest, but also between the English Government and the Indians, long after the former had escheated the Jesuit estates to the Crown. Had Lafitau, who was sent to France in 1717 to settle this affair, insisted on getting something more from the Regent's Council than what seems to have been a mere verbal acquiescence in the location of the boundaries between the two seigniories, and had he secured a legal document which set down in black and white the rights of his Order, he would have saved all the worry the Indians caused his brethren in Canada and even the governors, French and English, for over a hundred years.

The site chosen for the new village of Caughnawaga was three miles west of La Susanne, along the river front, on land that had been added to the original grant of 1680. In 1716, a few Indians accompanied by a missionary went to live there; they began to cut down the trees and to prepare the ground. The removal of the families to their new cabins was effected slowly, for, according to

a local tradition, it was only in 1719 that the final installation of the mission took place, the church and residence not having been completed until two years later.

The village just abandoned by the Indians had been occupied by them for twenty-three years. After a very few summers, La Susanne—henceforth to be known as Kanatakwenke<sup>1</sup>—became quite obliterated with wild weeds and brushwood; nothing remained to recall the trials and consolations of a long period of intense missionary activity. Father Burtin informs us that up to the middle of the nineteenth century it was still easy to recognize the place on which the Indians had built their little bark-covered church. A pile of stones nearby, and a few surviving lilacs, indicated the spot where the Jesuits lived, where Father Lafitau discovered the ginseng plant, and where he gathered material for the literary works which brought him fame. On the main road, near the bridge crossing the creek, there was a little house occupied by an Indian farmer, “who assured me,” writes Father Burtin, “that while ploughing he often found crucifixes, beads, bits of axes, knives, pipes, and other objects, taken from the old cemetery which lay across the road from the church.”<sup>2</sup> Among those buried there were many Indian warriors who took an important part in the affairs of their nation. No traces now

1. Kanatakwenke, i.e., *where the village was taken from*. The site is also known to the Indians as *La Suzanne*, the name of the little river which flows into the St. Lawrence at that spot.

2. Caughnawaga archives *passim*.



remain to mark the graves in which their bones were laid. It is probable that when the Jesuits abandoned the village in 1719 they left behind them two of their most famous missionaries, Jacques de Lamberville and Jacques Bruyas, men whose names, so familiar in the pages of Canadian history, are undoubtedly inscribed in the Book of Life.

## CHAPTER VI

### The Final Migration

1719-1729

*A Permanent Site Chosen for the Village—Project to Build a Fort—Jesuit Opposition—Visit of the Historian Charlevoix—Gifts from France to the Mission—Correspondence between the English and French Governors—The Abenakis War—Albany's Scheming Foiled—Influence of Caughnawaga. Colden's Memoir—The West India Company. Fort Oswego Built—French Trade Handicapped. De Lauzon pleads for the Mission.*

THE migration to the new site at Caughnawaga was the fourth since the Indians quitted Laprairie in 1676. Forty years of mission life, dominated by religious teaching, under the guidance of earnest and sympathetic pastors, had permanently influenced the lives and characters of the Christian Iroquois. Undoubtedly many of the first arrivals from the cantons were long since dead. The majority of those living in 1716 had been born in one or other of the three villages; they had been baptized in infancy, and had grown up to manhood or womanhood, knowing nothing about any form of worship other than that professed by their Catholic forefathers. They had no superstitions to live down, no traditions to

forget. White prisoners of war, blending constantly with the tribe, had brought new ideas with them, and had given a special tone to the spirit reigning among the Indians at Caughnawaga. Except for the native Iroquois, which was the dominant language spoken, and the typical facial traits which were as prominent as ever, there was very little difference between the mission of Caughnawaga and any neighbouring parish.

A legitimate feeling of pride and contentment seemed to take possession of the Indians when they contemplated their splendid village site, the large new cabins in which they were to live, and the massive stone edifices which were to be the centre of their religious lives. Charlevoix described the charm of the spot on which they were built; he added that the church and the missionaries' residence were two of the finest buildings in the country, and that "it would seem that measures had been taken not to be obliged to move again."<sup>1</sup> The large tract of land which had been cleared little by little during the previous thirty years, and which the recent decision of the authorities in France still left to the Jesuits for the benefit of their mission, gave them a feeling of security that their future material wants would be provided

1. In a document written in 1829 and preserved in the Canadian Archives at Ottawa (*Corr. Gen.*, C 268, p. 938), the following details are given of the various migrations: "Ils sont restés une quinzaine d'années sur la rive est de la rivière du Portage. Une ancienne croix reste sur le terrain de l'ancien village et quelques décombres en terre. Leur deuxième station, d'après la même tradition, a été quelques arpents plus haut dans un endroit que l'on appelle à présent *chez Calo*. Ils n'ont été là que sept ans. La troisième station du village, d'après la même tradition sauvage, a été sur la rivière Susanne, à peu près une demi-lieue au-dessus du rapide. Ils sont demeurés là une quinzaine d'années, après quoi ils sont venus se fixer ici pour toujours."

for. The missionaries shared in the joy and optimism of their flock. The fact that they had built their church and residence of stone denoted a desire on their part for permanency of occupation; it was, in fact, a rather sure sign that they did not expect to be dislodged again. But it would be wrong to assert that their worries had ceased. Their dusky wards were now living above the Lachine rapids. The wide expanse of Lake St. Louis lay before their door, and no barriers protected them from the rear. No obstacle prevented the approach of an enemy either by land or by water; their position was more exposed than ever. And there was no telling when the English or their Iroquois allies might again become aggressive.

Although nothing presaged trouble in 1719, it was clear that from a strategic point of view the importance of Caughnawaga could not be overlooked. The authorities considered that a fort was needed there, but if it was decided to build one, Intendant Bégon insisted that it should be done by the Jesuits themselves, and that a portion of the two thousand francs given for the transfer of the village should be spent on the work. The missionaries strenuously objected to this proposal, not merely because the building of forts did not belong to their profession, but also because after their church and residence had been completed, there would be very little of the two thousand francs left for other purposes. When the intendant suggested that they could employ Indian help to fortify their village, the Jesuits replied



that the Indians did not take kindly to that kind of work; French labour would have to be sought and they could not bear the expense. Both Vaudreuil and Bégon admitted the force of the argument, but the colony was at peace and the intendant did not favour spending any more of the king's money on Caughnawaga. The final reply of the Jesuits was that their Christian Indians had always rendered good service to the colony, and it was the Government's own business to provide them with a fort when its erection became a necessity.

While admitting the need of some sort of defence against contingent enemies, the Jesuits were for the moment opposed to the erection of a regular fort at Caughnawaga, and they suggested other means of meeting the wants of the future. A fort ultimately meant the introduction of a garrison of soldiers among the Indians, and their experience in the past rendered them unfavourable to this amalgamation. M. de Longueuil visited Caughnawaga in 1720 to discuss the matter with Father Cholenec. As an alternative, an offer was made to build a fort of logs, but when de Longueuil submitted this project to M. Chaussegros de Léry, the official engineer, the latter was of opinion that if a strong fort were not built at once it would be useless to begin a weak one. "A log fort," he wrote in October, 1720, "is not worth much, when it is built as Indians usually build it in the forest. No such fort is built in time of peace, because wooden forts easily break down and are

good for nothing. When war is declared a fort of this kind can be built in five or six days."

The whole transaction placed the Jesuits in an awkward position. The governor and the intendant seemed determined on providing a fort large enough to receive an officer and a garrison; if the Jesuits did not build one, the government would do so, and soldiers would be sent to Caughnawaga in spite of them. Pushed to the wall, they at last decided to formulate their objections, one by one, on paper, and place them before the Sovereign Council in session at Quebec. These objections may be summarized as follows: The royal treasury would suffer, because, besides the fort, the king would be obliged to provide buildings to lodge a garrison of men who would live in idleness. It would be detrimental to His Majesty's service, because, as had happened in the past, when garrisons were stationed at other missions, the officers easily gave permission to the soldiers to work among the neighbouring farmers for their own profit, and those soldiers, being sometimes a whole year without presenting themselves at the fort, forgot their military drill and grew careless in discipline. It would be against the welfare of the Indians, because the presence of soldiers in the village had never failed to be the occasion of abuse and of scandal. The Jesuits admitted that the governor had always sent officers who were agreeable to them, but it often happened that the idle soldiers and even the officers themselves created great disorder by supplying the Indians with

liquor; as a result quarrels were continually arising in the village between the French and the Indians which threatened to compromise the authority of the missionaries over the latter. Finally, the establishment of a fort at Caughnawaga was inopportune; no regular garrison was needed there, since if dissension should arise within the village itself, a few French soldiers, twenty at most, could never get the upper hand of two hundred Indian warriors, nor could they defend the village in case of a surprise attack from an outside enemy. In the late Iroquois wars, not only was Caughnawaga not defended by soldiers from Montreal, but Montreal itself had to be defended by soldiers sent from the village.

The plan of having French garrisons in Indian villages originated in an innocent request of the missionaries for two or three soldiers to spend the winter with them, for the purpose of providing help or protection in case of fire or trouble, when the Indians were off on the hunt and when only a few old women remained at home. The petitions were readily granted, and commandants and soldiers were sent to live in the villages. But when the custom threatened to become permanent the missionaries repented of having asked for a favour which turned out to be a nuisance.

Notwithstanding all their objections to the building of the fort, De Ramezay, Governor of Montreal, under whose jurisdiction Caughnawaga was placed, still insisted on the execution of the project, and he submitted a couple of reasons of

his own why an officer should be stationed there. First, there should be some one there on whom he could rely, that is, a confidential man who could keep him informed of what was going on; and, secondly, a garrison was necessary to keep the Indians from trading with Albany.

The Jesuits gave decisive answers to both of these reasons. In the first place, they were sufficiently interested to be on the alert, and they would notify the Governor of Montreal of anything which might happen derogatory to the public weal; secondly, the presence of an officer and soldiers would favor rather than prevent trade with the English, as in former years some of the officers themselves shared in it. Ever since the garrison had been withdrawn from the other village near the rapid, the mission had been better off, the king's service had not suffered, and Vaudreuil admitted that the Indians were never so well pleased with their missionaries.<sup>1</sup> Should there be danger of an invasion in time of war, it would be an easy matter to send a garrison; then the officer might lodge with the missionaries and the soldiers be distributed among the cabins. As these dangers were no longer imminent, the Jesuits did not see the necessity of bringing white men into an Indian village, where they would be useless and even harmful.

So intent, however, was De Ramezay on gaining his point that he succeeded in having an order issued, in 1720, to locate *Sieur de Contrecoeur* at

1. Canadian Archives, Corresp. Gen., C. 11. 106.



Caughnawaga, and this officer would undoubtedly have been lodged there had not the arguments which the Jesuits put forward obliged the Marquis de Vaudreuil to yield. The governor-general suspended the execution of the order until the king had been more fully informed. The whole episode is interesting, but the plan of forcing an officer and garrison on a little Indian village so close to Montreal gives us a glimpse at the mercenary spirit which reigned in the colony twenty years before Bigot began his systematic peculations. *Sieur Pécaudy de Contrecoeur*, in whose favour the royal order had been issued, was a relative of *Madame de Ramezay*, wife of the Governor of Montreal. This worthy official of the king wished to place a favourite of his family in a position where he should have the opportunity, as others had before him, of carrying on trade with the Indians and thus enriching himself.

The Jesuits had succeeded in keeping white soldiers away from the mission; and yet it would seem that the civil authorities did not care to admit that they had been vanquished. The sum of 4,181 livres had been granted from the royal treasury for military purposes at Sault St. Louis, and in the year 1721, *M. Chaussegros de Léry*, who wished to build something permanent at once, set about preparing plans and the estimated cost of a house and barrack for a future garrison there. For the moment the governor-general had been definitely won over to the Jesuits' point of view, and in lieu of anything better, resolved to use the

royal grant in the construction of a powder magazine at Quebec.

Meanwhile the controversy continued in a correspondence with the higher officials in France. A sharp letter from the Count de Maurepas, dated May, 1724, complained that the fort at Sault St. Louis, which should have been completed two years previously, had not yet been begun. An attempt at construction would seem to have been made in the summer of that year, but the work was again suspended by order of the governor. The Jesuits were in earnest in their opposition, and had evidently got into communication with Versailles. Vaudreuil's suspending order was upheld in France, and other plans of his were approved.<sup>1</sup>

In 1725, the President of the Navy Board informed him that the king had given a favourable ear to his suggestion that the sum of money destined for the new fort at Caughnawaga should be employed in strengthening the fortifications in Montreal; on the condition, however, that when His Majesty considered a fort at the mission necessary the sum of 4,181 livres should be deducted from the budget destined for Montreal.<sup>2</sup> As we shall see, the stone fort was built later, but the correspondence just quoted shows that little or no progress had been made before 1725.

The Jesuits who were guiding the destiny of Caughnawaga at that time, and who had to struggle so persistently against the presence of a gar-

1. Canadian Archives, Corresp. B. 48, p. 59.

2. Ibidem, B. 48, p. 59.

rison there, were Pierre Cholenec, who retired to Quebec and died there in 1723; Julien Garnier, an old man of seventy-eight, who had been nearly half a century labouring among the savages, and Pierre de Lauzon, for whose return the Indians had petitioned Father de la Chasse, superior of the Order in Canada. A fourth missionary, Jacques Quintin de la Bretonnière, had arrived at Caughnawaga the same year, and was then deeply engaged in the study of the Iroquois tongue.

Probably the most distinguished visitor in those first uneventful years was Father François Xavier de Charlevoix, the historian of New France, who spent some weeks there in the spring of 1721. He had already lived four years in the colony, having taught in the college of Quebec from 1705 to 1709, when he returned to France to prepare for his ordination to the priesthood. The knowledge he had acquired about Canada in those four years had given him a right to discuss matters connected with Canadian exploration, and when the expedition was organized in Paris to proceed to America, "in order to make enquiries there regarding the Western Sea," he secured his appointment as one of its chief members. During his stay at Caughnawaga, on his way to the unknown West, he wrote to the Duchesse de Leguinières:

"I came hither to pass a part of the Eastertide, a time of devotion when everything draws to piety in the village. All the religious exercises are carried on in a very edifying manner; one



*Souliny, photo*

MISSIONARIES' RESIDENCE, CAUGHNAWAGA

BUILT BETWEEN 1716 AND 1721

*Showing a portion of the old Fort, completed in 1754*





still feels the impression which has been left by the fervour of the first converts, for it is certain that for a long time this was the spot in Canada where one might see the best examples of those heroic virtues with which God usually enriches a new mission . . . . On arriving here I counted on leaving immediately after Easter, but nothing is more uncertain than a journey of this sort. I am still at sea as to the date of my departure, and as one must draw profit out of everything when one travels as I am doing, I spend my time in conversation with the old missionaries who have lived here a long time and with the Indians, and I have acquired much knowledge regarding the various peoples who inhabit this vast continent.”<sup>1</sup>

Charlevoix's future career is sufficiently well known. He penetrated to the Mississippi river, but was seized with a fever somewhere in the Illinois region, which detained him in his exploration tour for several weeks. In starting on this futile trip, his good faith and enthusiasm were undoubtedly imposed upon. As far as the success of his expedition was concerned, the Western Sea remained as mythical and as far away as ever. Father Nau, a Caughnawaga missionary, writing fifteen years later, quaintly remarked that “the Western Sea would have been discovered long ago if the people had wished it. The Count de Maurepas is quite right when he says that the officials in Canada are not looking for the Western

1. CHARLEVOIX: *Journal d'un Voyage*, pp. 175-8.

Sea but for the sea of the beaver.”<sup>1</sup> Foiled in his efforts to penetrate further west, Charlevoix sailed down the Mississippi to New Orleans and boarded a ship for France, where in later years he published the works which have added prestige to his memory and have made his name familiar to all students of Canadian history.<sup>2</sup>

The historian of New France remained a firm friend of Caughnawaga after his return to Europe. Both he and Lafitau made the mission known by their pens, and undoubtedly secured many benefactors for it in the motherland. In all probability it was shortly after the completion of the church in 1721 that it received the superb gilt and carved altar which is still in use and which connoisseurs acknowledge to be a work of art. In 1732, a gift of relics of three of the early martyrs, Saint Theophilus, Saint Sernus, and Saint Redemptus, was made to the church at Caughnawaga by Father de Richebourg, a French Jesuit residing in Rome, a treasure which he undoubtedly confided to the care of some missionary starting for Canada. Those three authenticated relics are embedded in the main altar. In the course of years, other relics of the saints were added to the

1. *Aulneau Letters*, p. 67.

2. For nearly a century, the residence at Caughnawaga possessed a small painting which, tradition asserted, was the portrait of Charlevoix. No one doubting the genuineness of the work, it was reproduced by John Gilmory Shea, Justin Winsor, and others. It was even accepted in France as a true portrait of the famous historian. On closer inspection, in recent years, it was shown to be a copper-plate engraving of Father Paul Lejeune, S.J., made in 1665, the year after his death. The Caughnawaga portrait was a forgery, skilfully hidden under a coat of paint. No authentic portrait of Charlevoix is known to exist.

collection; for instance, those of Saint Peter Chrysologus, Saint Zeno and his martyred companions, Saint Philomena, and a precious relic of the True Cross.<sup>1</sup>

While the Caughnawaga Indians were settling down in what was to be their permanent home, they had little time to devote to outside affairs. Echoes reached them now and then of what was happening beyond their pale, but they were busy in peaceful pursuits, and scalp-hunting had for the moment lost its glamour. Occasional visits from Albany and from the cantons brought the news that the English were extending their trading operations westward, and were urging the Indians to go among the tribes living along the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, where the French had already established fur posts and where they intended to remain. On the plea of first occupancy, the French claimed exclusive right to the territory watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries, and they were making frantic efforts to strengthen their alliance with the Western tribes, solely with the object of keeping the English out, or at least of minimizing their influence, should they succeed in gaining a foothold.

During three whole years De Vaudreuil was busy circumventing the efforts of the enemy to establish connections in the West. The skirmishes which took place now and then between the rival traders in that distant land were incidents without serious results, but they intensified national hatreds

1. Caughnawaga Archives.



when the news reached the two colonies; evidently the peace of Utrecht had not deepened the mutual love of the French and the English in America.

Shortly after assuming his official burdens, William Burnett, who succeeded Hunter as governor of New York, wrote a letter to the French governor of Canada which revealed the bitter feeling that existed. He assured him that on his recent arrival in America he had hoped to be able to salute him in a friendly way, and to see in him an agreeable neighbour, having heard so much about him and his family; he was even impatient to open up a correspondence with him, in which all the pleasure was to be on his side. Before two weeks had passed, however, he had learned some disagreeable things. The Five Nations Indians had come to inform him that *Sieur de Joncaire*, the French interpreter living among them, was urging them to abandon English interests, promising them land near *Chambly*, and that the French were building a fort at *Niagara* and had already hoisted the French flag among the *Senecas*.

This was very unpleasant news for Burnett; it left him undecided as to what course he should pursue in order to carry out the articles of the treaty of Utrecht regarding the lordship of the English over the Five Nations. It was particularly distressing to the English governor to learn that those Indians were about to receive Catholic missionaries to instruct them. "I regret exceedingly," he wrote, "that while the intelligence continues so good between the two Crowns in Europe, the

proceedings of the French in these colonies have been so different. I wish to believe that such is done in part without your knowledge; that most of these disorders are due to this Joncaire who has long deserved hanging for the infamous murder of Montour which he committed. I leave you to judge whether a man of such a character should be employed in an affair so delicate and in which every occasion of suspicion ought to be carefully avoided."

The Marquis de Vaudreuil's reply to this sharp letter was pointed and dignified. He was greatly obliged to the governor of the English Province for the frankness with which he made known his grievances, and then undertook to refute them one by one. Ever since the expedition of *Sieur de la Salle*, in the previous century, Niagara had been in the possession of the French. Thirty-four years previously, the French had a fort there with a garrison of one hundred men. While sickness had obliged them to abandon the spot, trading had never ceased. There had never been any opposition from the Five Nations to the building of a fort at Niagara; and even after it was built those Indians were bartering their furs there as freely as with the English.

Burnett's assertions that Joncaire was urging the Indians to side with the French with the bait of a tract of land near Chambly, and that the French flag had been hoisted among the Senecas to withdraw them from the allegiance of the King of Great Britain, Vaudreuil stigmatized as rumours

coming from ill-disposed persons who were endeavouring to disturb the peace between the two colonies. Not merely had he given no thought to the bringing of Indians to live near Chambly, but he did not prevent the Indians of Caughnawaga and other missions in Canada from going to live with the Five Nations when they desired to do so.

"You observe," continued De Vaudreuil, "that you have been notified that the Indians of the Five Nations were about to receive French priests. The Senecas have twice sent delegates from their villages urgently entreating me to send them two missionaries, having expressed regret to me at the withdrawal of those they formerly had. I told them through M. de Longueuil that if they would come to get some I should have them supplied, not considering myself at liberty to refuse this favour to Indians who believe themselves to be independent and with whom I am ordered to maintain good relations."

De Vaudreuil ended his letter by stating that Burnett had been misinformed about the character and qualities of Joncaire, the French interpreter in the cantons. It was by his own orders that Joncaire had killed Montour for having induced the Upper Nations to open negotiations with Albany and for having urged them to wage war upon the French. In any event, Montour would have been hanged had it been possible to take him alive and bring him to the colony.

There is no record to tell us how Burnett received the French governor's categorical denial of his charges, but his Indian policy continued to be more radical than that of his predecessors. He aimed at nothing less than the complete interruption of communication between the French and the Iroquois of the cantons. In September, 1722, he told the assembled chiefs of the Five Nations that he would refuse to recognize as his brethren any Indians who went to Canada, and he would positively forbid them to return, for he hated to see such double-hearted persons.

"If they will be Frenchmen, let them go and be Frenchmen entirely," he exclaimed; "otherwise they will but deceive and corrupt the good brethren of the Five Nations by living with them." Burnett's drastic prohibition had to be taken seriously, for in a letter to the Lords of Trade he mentioned that suspected persons must swear that they had not traded with the French in Canada and must pay a penalty of a hundred pounds if they refused to take the oath. The French were evidently dangerous neighbours, but they were leaning upon their ancient rights, even if by a decrease in their trading profits they were augmenting their influence in the cantons.

The war with the Abenakis and the other tribes along the Atlantic coast was then at its height; those Indians would listen to no compromise until their wrongs had been righted. English colonists had seized their lands in violation of all law and justice, and, in order to uphold this



violation, Governor Dudley, of Boston, appealed for aid to Burnett, of New York. In September, 1724, the latter despatched some Iroquois chiefs to interview the Abenakis in Canada and endeavour to detach them from their tribal brethren in Maine.<sup>1</sup> On their way to the mission of St. Francis the envoys passed through Montreal, where they were met by Vaudreuil, who happily was present when they arrived, and who by a clever ruse set at naught the plans laid by Burnett.

"When we reached Montreal," they reported after their return to Albany, "we informed the governor-general that we had been sent by the Six Nations and the governor, and that our object was to go to St. Francis to have a conference with the Indians there." The mere mention of a visit to the Abenakis evidently gave Vaudreuil food for reflection and, according to the usual official custom, he put off hearing anything further the envoys had to say until the following day. "The governor sent for us next morning," they continued, "and said that he was glad we had informed him of our arrival and about our business, but since the Abenakis roamed through the woods they might meet us and do us harm. Then considering what was best to be done, he asked us if it were not better that he should bring the Abenakis to Montreal, where they would hear what we had to say and give us their answer. To this we replied, 'Father, we think it would be better for you to send for those Indians because

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 933.

they cannot understand our language, nor we theirs, and here we can easily procure an interpreter.' The governor thanked us for having accepted his proposal so readily, and thereupon sent a messenger stating that the Abenakis would be in Montreal in a few days. Meanwhile we were sent to Caughnawaga to spend the intervening time. During the night of the third day, the priest, who was our interpreter,<sup>1</sup> awakened us and said that the Abenakis had already come, which we thought extraordinary. The priest left that same night, but we only the next morning. When we came to Montreal we went directly to the governor who said that we should wait a while; he would send for us in the afternoon."

Meanwhile the Abenakis of St. Francis had reached Montreal and had an interview with De Vaudreuil. When they learned that Governor Burnett had sent envoys to invite them to Albany to dissuade them from helping their countrymen in New England, they absolutely refused to go. With typical Indian dignity they made it known to the envoys that if the English governor wished to treat of peace he should first come to Montreal with the prisoners he held belonging to their nation.

The scheme of holding the Albany envoys in Montreal instead of allowing them to proceed at once to St. Francis, and of then sending them to Caughnawaga, evidently had an influence on the envoys themselves and on the reply they brought back to Burnett, a reply which was not of such a

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. V, p. 714.

nature as to please him. During their short visit of three days at the mission they had imbibed the atmosphere of the place and learned a few things they had not previously known. The interpreter who took them in hand was Father de Lauzon, who informed them that some of their own tribesmen were in prison in Boston, as well as the Abenakis, and that instead of fighting on the English side, they should be found helping the Abenakis to obtain justice.

At no moment in his career was de Lauzon's personal influence over the Iroquois more fully felt than in the change of sentiment which he effected so quickly in the envoys of the Governor of New York. Their interview with the Abenakis of St. Francis, who, in the presence of Vaudreuil and of De Lauzon, gave them the details of the treatment their tribesmen were receiving in Maine, won those visitors over completely. The dastardly murder of the Jesuit, Sebastien Râle, at Norridgewock, in August, 1724, hardly a month before their visit, had also a great deal to do with their change of heart; for even the pagan Iroquois saw the cruelty of that shameful act. They could not forget the kindly offices which had always been lavished on pagan and Christian alike by the Jesuit missionaries in the cantons, and they steadfastly refused to urge the Abenakis to bury the hatchet. They even remarked to Burnett, after they had returned to Albany, that some of their own Iroquois brethren had been ill-used by the whites in Boston and were still lingering in prison

there, and they, too, wished to be avenged. Utrecht and Burnett notwithstanding, French influence was not dead among the Six Nations, for while the independent Iroquois wished to remain friends of the English, they showed no desire to be enemies of the French.

All was not plain sailing for the Governor of New York, on account of the manœuvring of the French agents who were still living in the cantons, as he found to his cost when, in 1724, he once again endeavoured to persuade the Iroquois to take up arms against the Abenakis, at least as mercenary recruits. "If you will be so unworthy and so cowardly," he told them, "as to avoid going to war as a whole nation, as you ought to do, you cannot do less than permit your young men to enlist as soldiers under the government of Boston; for this is the custom in Europe, and the French know it well, that when they are at war with the English they go to a people who are at peace with the English and get leave to enlist soldiers from that nation, and this is not thought any breach of the peace . . . . So that if the Governor of Boston can persuade any of your young men to enlist, this by no means engages you in the war. These young men act only on their private account."<sup>1</sup>

The Indian moral code did not recognize any such distinctions, and Burnett failed in his attempt to persuade the young warriors to become auxiliary fighters. Boston itself did not have any better success than Albany. The reply of the Iroquois

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. V, p. 720.



to Dudley, when they were asked to join his troops, brought him face to face with the elements of primitive justice. If Boston wished to have peace with the Abenakis—they replied—let Boston give the Abenakis back what belonged to them; let it give them back their lands and release their prisoners. "All mankind is not without thinking," declared the Iroquois, "and our thoughts are that the delivering up of the captives is the likeliest way to peace." <sup>1</sup>

The influence of Caughnawaga and its missionaries thus continued to radiate throughout the country; it was felt in the affairs of both colonies, and was resented by the English because it was detrimental to their interests. In proof of this we have the embittered testimony of Cadwallader Colden, the surveyor-general of New York, in his memoir on the fur trade, at the end of the year 1724. He wrote that the French had been indefatigable in making discoveries and in carrying on trade with the Indians, and that what the English knew they got from French maps and books. The barrenness of the soil and the coldness of the climate of Canada obliged the greater number of its inhabitants to seek their living in the fur trade. Were it not for this traffic, the governor and other officers could not live.

"Neither could their priests find any means to satisfy their luxury and ambition without it," he stated. "All heads and hands are employed to push it, and their cleverest men think it is the

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. V, p. 724.

surest way to advance themselves by travelling among the Indians and learning their languages; even the bigotry and enthusiasm of their hot-headed missionaries have been very useful in advancing this commerce. The Government prudently turned the edge of the zeal of those hot-heads towards the conversion of the Indians, many of them having spent their lives under the greatest hardships in endeavouring to gain the Indians to their religion and to the love of the French nation, while at the same time they are no less industrious in representing the English as the enemies of mankind."

As Colden interpreted it, the whole policy of the French, both civil and religious, was cunningly turned to the general advancement of the French fur trade; in a word, the art and the industry of the French, and of the religious missions in particular, had so far prevailed upon the Indians in North America that they were everywhere being directed by French counsels. "Even our own Five Nations," he wrote, "who formerly were mortal enemies of the French and who have always lived in the strictest friendship with the English, have been so far gained by the French priests that several of the Mohawks, who live nearest the English, have left their habitations and are gone to settle near Montreal in Canada, and all the rest of them profess a dread of the power of the French. That much of this is truly owing to the priests, appears from the fact that many of the sachems of the Iroquois wear crucifixes

when they come to Albany, and those Mohawk Indians who have gone over to the French are now commonly known by the name of Praying Indians, it being customary for them to go through the streets of Montreal praying and begging alms."

But this was not the worst feature of the nefarious influence of the Jesuits. "In the time of the last war, clandestine trade began to be carried on by Indians from Albany to Montreal," continued Colden, referring to what happened during the King William war. "This gave rise to the Caughnawaga or Praying Indians, who are entirely made up of deserters from the Mohawk and river Indians, and who were either enticed by the priests or by the merchants to carry goods from Albany to Montreal, or who ran away from some mischief done here. Those Indians now count about eighty fighting men and live about four leagues from Montreal. They neither plant nor hunt, but depend chiefly upon this private trade for their subsistence. In time of war they gave the French intelligence of all designs here against them. By them, likewise, the French engaged our Five Nations in a war with the Indian friends of Virginia, and from them we might expect the greatest mischief in time of war, seeing that every part of our province is as well known to them as to any of the inhabitants."

Coming from an English official, this was rather eloquent admission of the influence of Caughnawaga on the entire country; but notwithstanding

Colden's dismal view of things, the English had really the better of the bargain. The prospects of a brisk trade in furs were never so bright for the English as they were in 1724, while they were cloudy and uninviting for the French. Colden must have known that the traffic in Canada was carried on under serious handicaps for the reason that the French and Indian hunters were restrained from dealing with any but the West India Company, which for half a century had a monopoly in the colony. Reorganized in 1717, it became practically a state within a state. It will suffice to read the fifty-six articles of the letters-patent issued by the Regent of France, the Duc d'Orleans, and counter-signed by Phélippeaux, to realize the commercial supremacy that had been given to this company in French America, all with a view, as the preamble informs us, of putting order in the financial chaos of the mother country and of reforming the abuses introduced during the long wars of Louis XIV.

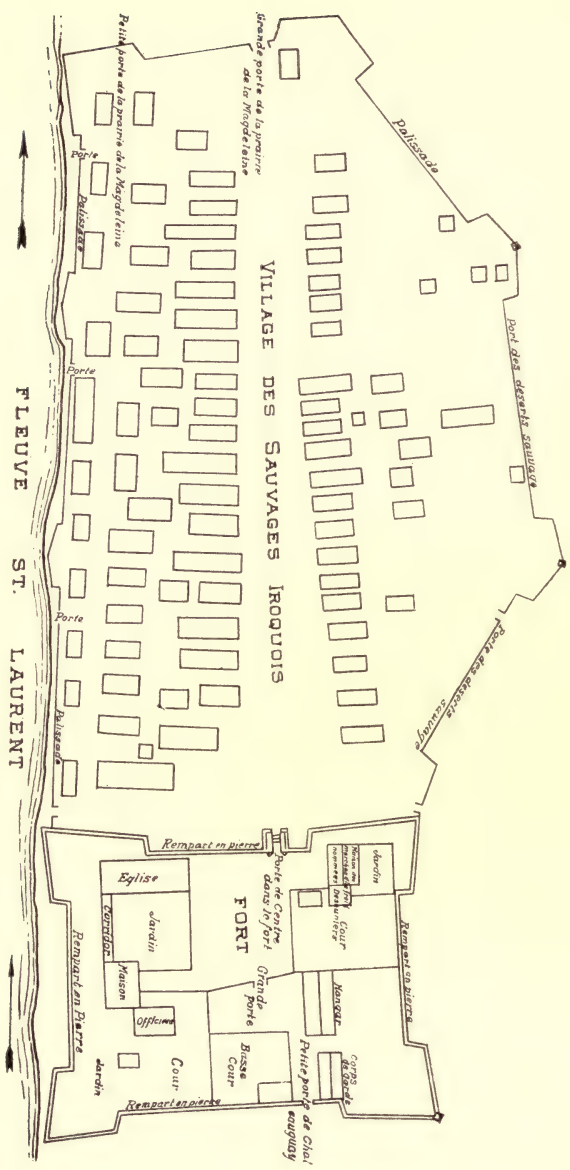
The West India Company had a monopoly of trade in Louisiana and along the Lower Mississippi and the exclusive privilege of the beaver trade for the whole of Canada, the only exception being the privilege given to the inhabitants of using beaver skins for purposes of barter, but not for exportation. All persons found guilty of violating these restrictions had their goods confiscated, and all foreign trade was forbidden except that carried on by the company, which was authorized to build forts and strongholds, to equip warships



and enlist soldiery; in a word, it was empowered to do anything deemed necessary for the protection of its commerce on sea and land.

France took the organization under its special protection, and promised to employ force of arms to assure its entire freedom of navigation and of trade against all nations. In return for these privileges, the company was obliged to pay a heavy tax to the King of France; and it had to keep this in mind when it regulated its prices with the hundreds of hunters who brought their furs yearly to its depots. In the final analysis, it was the hunters who paid the tax in the low prices they received for their furs. The regulation reacted upon the whole Canadian trade, and both Indian and French hunters chafed under it, declaring that they were no longer equitably paid for their long absence in the forests, for their hard labour, and for the great sacrifices they were obliged to make while on the hunt.

The Albany merchants, on the other hand, were labouring under no such difficulties. While the season of navigation in Canada was restricted to the summer months, the English were able to import goods cheaply from the mother country at all seasons of the year and in half the time required by French sailing vessels, which, owing to contrary winds, were often held in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or in the river for a whole month. English goods were consequently cheaper than French goods, and, in their traffic with the Indians, Albany and New York merchants were able to



PLAN OF FORT AT CAUGHNAWAGA, 1754



undersell the French, even to the extent of doubling the prices they gave the Indians for their furs. The result was that both French and Indian hunters were caught by the bait of high prices. "The French traders," wrote Colden, "must be ruined by carrying on this trade in competition with New York, and they would have been ruined before now if they had not found means to carry the beavers to Albany, where they got double the price they must be sold for in Canada."

This state of affairs explains the clandestine trade so often mentioned, and so often stormed against, in the official correspondence of the time. It also explains the publication, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, of numerous royal edicts, numerous because they were ignored, forbidding under severe penalties the carrying on of trade, especially in beaver skins, with outsiders. An edict issued in June, 1719,<sup>1</sup> authorized the officials in New France to visit and search every home, secular or ecclesiastical, suspected of holding contraband goods. In 1724, the king, having been informed that furs were taken out of the colony in an underhand manner, to pay for merchandise purchased from the English, published an edict forbidding anyone, even Indians, to make a journey to the English provinces unless they had first received permission from the governor. Those who received such permissions had to pass by way of Chambly and present themselves to the commandant of that fort to have their canoes

1. *Arrêts et Ordonnances Royales*, Quebec, 1854, Vol. I, p. 401.



searched.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding these precautions, trade had been going on with the English for many years, and the French governors could do little to prevent it. Frontenac and De Denonville had built forts at Cataraqui, Niagara and Michilimackinac in the preceding century, and had succeeded in turning a great deal of the traffic in the direction of Montreal; but times had changed, and the English were becoming more aggressive.

The fur company, now newly organized, had placed new responsibilities and had imposed strict obligations upon the colonial administration, and it was assuredly with no slight irritation that the Marquis de Vaudreuil learned that the English were about to build a fort at Oswego, on the south shore of Lake Ontario, where they could intercept the fur canoes on the way down the St. Lawrence. He was well aware that high prices would strongly tempt the Indian and the French hunters to carry to Albany the rich cargoes coming from the western country. At the instigation of Vaudreuil, a delegation of Two Mountain and Caughnawaga chiefs went to Albany, in 1725, to join with their well-disposed Iroquois brethren there in protesting against the erection of a fort at Oswego, but they returned home very much displeased with the reception that was given them. Tekarihoken, the chief of the Caughnawagas, reported that the English asked him why his people permitted the French to build a fort at Niagara if the French were so much opposed to a fort at Oswego. The

1. *Arrêts et Ordonnances Royales*, Quebec, 1854, Vol. I, p. 489.

delegates replied that they never thought Onontiio would build a fort at Niagara. They then expressed their willingness to demolish it if the King of England so desired; adding sarcastically, that "they had only to write to him to learn what his pleasure was."

Oswego soon became the subject of correspondence between the Courts of France and England.<sup>1</sup> Although the fort was built to protect English interests, Sir Robert Walpole, the British prime minister, who was noted for moderation in his foreign policies, admitted that he saw in this act a violation of the terms of Utrecht, since the treaty provided that the subjects of one crown should not molest the subjects of the other, nor encroach upon the other's rights as long as the territorial limits between the provinces had not been fixed. The French were wrong, however, in claiming the exclusive right to trade with the Western nations, trade everywhere being as free to the English as to the French. Both nations were spreading out toward the West; one built a post at Oswego, the other at Niagara, simply with a view to gathering in all the trade they could. As long as the fifteenth article of the treaty of Utrecht read as it did, it was hard to see why it was a crime for the English to build a fort at Oswego if the French could have one at Niagara. All both nations had to do was to continue traffic and to make the best they could out of existing conditions.

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 996.

Fort Oswego proved very advantageous to the English trade with the Indians of the cantons and of the West; but it became a source of strife between the two nations which lasted until the end of the French *régime*. Even had it not been built, the merchants of Albany were not worrying about the future; the prices they were paying for furs were having a magic effect upon the trade with the Indians. The West India Company was wise enough to see this, but not wise enough to profit by its past experience. Owing to missionary influence, the fur hunters of Caughnawaga were still practically devoted to the French, but missionary influence did not attempt to dictate to the empty pockets of their converts or to give them unsound advice when their means of livelihood was at stake. Loyalty was an admirable sentiment, even in the eighteenth century, but high prices appealed just as strongly to the Christian Iroquois in Canada as they did to their pagan brethren in the cantons, and it was useless to tell hungry Indians, even converts, to accept low prices for their furs simply because France, three thousand miles away, was nearing bankruptcy.

Those skilful Indian hunters were to be found far and near; they were successful in their calling, and there would have been no difficulty in holding their trade had a reasonable policy been pursued in dealing with them. But the French fur company persisted in its low valuations; it treated the Indians as children until at last the Caughnawagas practically rebelled. Vaudreuil intervened, but he

did not mend matters when he tried to hold the missionaries responsible for the business transactions of their flock. He praised the zeal with which the Indians of the various missions helped the Abenakis in their struggle against the English, but he blamed them for carrying on trade with Albany; and following the lead of Frontenac, whose correspondence was on file at Quebec, he naturally had a fling at the Caughnawaga and the Oka missionaries.

"Although the Indians successfully organized several detachments," he informed the French minister, "they have not responded to my intentions. I would ask you to write to their missionaries not to permit the establishment of any house of commerce in their village, as I am only too well informed that they permit the French to furnish the Indians with merchandise for trading purposes." It was undoubtedly Vaudreuil's letter that drew from the Minister of Marine and Colonies, in 1725, a note to Father d'Avaugour, procurator, in Paris, for the Canadian missions: "I am informed," wrote the Count de Maurepas, "that the missionaries of your order at Sault St. Louis allow the French to have stores in their missions where the Indians may obtain goods for trading purposes. This is a source of considerable loss to the commerce of Montreal, and I would ask you to write to the superior of your missions in Canada not to permit any stores to exist in the mission of Sault St. Louis."<sup>1</sup> We shall see later what value

1. Canadian Archives: Corresp. B., Vol. 48, p. 56.



should be placed on this and other accusations made against the missionaries of Caughnawaga; we shall let them give their own interpretation of their conduct in their relations with the French fur company.

Traffic with the English was evidently being carried on extensively by the Indian converts, for de Vaudreuil's successor, the Marquis de Beauharnois, wrote a letter to France in October, 1727, that he had taken measures to prevent the Indians of the Christian villages, especially the young hunters, from trading with the Albany merchants. It was on this point that he strongly insisted during a visit to Caughnawaga. The chiefs pledged their word that the trade would be stopped and the connections broken, and Beauharnois accepted their pledge. But there were other considerations which should have appealed to a representative of His Most Christian Majesty. Worldly wisdom and greed and selfishness saw, for the moment, only the interests of the fur trade; the Jesuits perceived that higher interests were in peril.

Breaking connections with the pagan Iroquois meant closing the avenue to migration and conversions; keeping the road clear to Albany and the cantons, even at the expense of the fur company, meant the transfer of as many Indians as possible to Caughnawaga, where they could be instructed in the Christian religion and thus become allies of the French. The Jesuits were bidding for human souls, and had little concern for the dividends of the West India Company.

If trade were stopped with the cantons, other means would have to be found to attract the pagans, other resources to protect the mission. This point of view was not lost on the governor, who promised to acquaint the King of France with the situation and endeavour to secure a royal subsidy to aid the missionaries in their eminently patriotic and religious work.

In a letter dated November 1st, 1729, Beauharnois and the intendant Hocquart sent to Versailles an extract from a letter written by Father de Lauzon, asking for an increase of revenue to draw the Iroquois of the cantons to Caughnawaga and thus foil the efforts of the English, who were doing all in their power to prevent these migrations. De Lauzon's long experience enabled him to assert what had often been asserted before, that the only method of drawing the Indians from under English influence was to attract them to the Christian missions in the colony.

"It is your wish," he wrote to the governor in October, 1729, "that I remind you of the affair about which I had the honour to speak to you this summer in Montreal. This was the means to be taken to detach the Iroquois from the English little by little, by urging them to come and live in the Christian missions. It is easy to reach them through their relatives who are domiciled with us and to invite them to come to live with us. An experience of thirteen years has taught me that we may succeed in this way when some little present is given to those who quit their own

country and come to ours. Since I have been at the Sault mission, not a year has passed that some families have not left the Iroquois country to live among the French and to be instructed in Christianity. It is nothing that all have not remained, but it has appeared to me that what has discouraged them most was that their needs were not as well looked after in our missions as in their own country. For although the Christian Indians are very much inclined to help those who come from elsewhere to live amongst them, and although the missionaries help them as much as they can, it often happens that it is not possible to meet all the needs of the newcomers as quickly and as abundantly as they would like. Hence it happens that the Indians imagine that they are not esteemed, and fearing that their poverty, the effects of which they begin to feel, may last a long time, they decide to return home. It would therefore be necessary to propose to the court to grant the mission of Sault St. Louis some revenue which would help the missionaries to aid these newcomers to till the soil, in order that they might reap a crop the first year after their arrival. It is also to be noted that the mission of the Sault is the oldest and the most populous, that it has given many proofs of its attachment to the French in the wars against the English and the Iroquois. It is the one, however, which has felt the least the generosity of the king, having only 500 livres for three missionaries. An increase of revenue would give me the means to send a few deputations now

and then to the Iroquois villages to draw them to us and help them to settle down. It would also procure the glory of God in working for their salvation and would at the same time strengthen our forces by taking away from England those whom she could use against us in time of war.

The auspices under which this letter reached Versailles should have produced the desired effect. Both Beauharnois and Hocquart had full confidence in the judgment of de Lauzon; they recorded the fact elsewhere that they had every reason to congratulate themselves on the conduct of the superior at Caughnawaga and on his zeal for the king's service and for the good of religion. But Versailles did not listen. Not only were the revenues of the mission not augmented, but, as we learn from a letter written by De Lauzon to the Comte de Maurepas, in 1741, the presents in clothing, food and ammunition, which it was customary to give the Indians every year, were considerably reduced.



## CHAPTER VII

### End of the French Regime

1726-1760

*Expedition against the Foxes—Nau's First Impressions of Caughnawaga—Visit of Father Aulneau. Hostilities in the West—Contraband Commerce with Albany—Beauharnois and the Jesuits. Arrival of Tournois—The Desauniers Episode. Activity of the Warriors—Attachment to Prisoners taken in War—Banishment of Tournois. Foundation of Saint Regis—The Caughnawagas in the Seven Years' War.*

THE French colony was now enjoying a season of peace and prosperity hitherto unknown. It was the legacy of twenty-two years of fruitful government which the Marquis de Beauharnois, appointed governor in June, 1726, inherited from his predecessor, who died during the previous year. De Vaudreuil had been a successful administrator as well as a brave general, and his loss was deplored by all classes, farmers, traders, citizens and soldiers. Even the Christian Indians had experienced the wisdom of his counsels, for he had always taken a fatherly interest in his dusky children at Caughnawaga, and was ever ready to listen to the suggestions which their missionaries made for their welfare. As a result, perfect

harmony reigned in their dealings with the French; no element of discord disturbed the routine of their daily lives. Under the prudent guidance of Father Pierre de Lauzon and of Father Jacques Quintin de la Bretonnière,<sup>1</sup> the little village, free from the alarms of war, was settling down to a season of quiet and repose which promised to continue, when a dark cloud suddenly appeared on the horizon.

During the spring of 1728, the Marquis de Beauharnois gave the order to organize an expedition as speedily as possible against the nation of the Foxes, in the Illinois country. Those fierce Indians were forgetting the lesson they had learned at Detroit, sixteen years previously,<sup>2</sup> and were again giving trouble to the French and the Indian allies. The lesson had to be repeated, and over four hundred Frenchmen with eight hundred Indians of various nations, under the command of M. de Ligneris, started off over the Ottawa route to the shores of the Mississippi. On their way they were joined by the Caughnawaga warriors, whom Father de la Bretonnière accompanied as chaplain.

This was De la Bretonnière's first trip to the West and undoubtedly one that he did not soon forget, not merely because he was following a route

1. Jacques Quintin de la Bretonnière was born at Bayeux, May 4, 1689, and entered the Jesuit Order at the age of twenty-one. After the usual course of study and teaching in France, he arrived in Canada in 1721 and was sent immediately to Caughnawaga, where he remained until 1745. The rest of his life was spent in the college at Quebec, where he died August 1st, 1754.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, pp. 857-866.

whose every twist and turn and rock and cape were familiar to the men of his Order for over a hundred years, but also because the spectacle which presented itself to him in the summer of 1728 was one he had never before witnessed. The waters of the Ottawa were covered with a multitude of canoes carrying twelve or thirteen hundred French and Indians, whose constant shouting and singing called back weird echoes from the dense forests which lined both sides of the river. A slight stretch of the imagination is all that is required to picture the scene of chaos and turmoil which met the young Jesuit's gaze when this boisterous army ran ashore at night to bivouac, or when at the foot of each of the thirty-five portages of the Ottawa and Nipissing route, the muscular Frenchmen and the Indians<sup>1</sup> slinging their frail canoes and cargoes over their shoulders and thump-lines over their foreheads, plodded under their heavy burdens over rocks and fallen trees to reach the stretches of calm water ahead. Names still familiar to travellers over the Ottawa route rang in the ears of the young army chaplain—Long Sault, the scene of Dollard's exploit, la Chaudière, one of the homes of Asticou, Portage des Chats, the hunting-ground of Chevalier de la Salle,<sup>2</sup> Bonnechère, Calumets, Allumette Island, headquarters of

1. The only advantage the Indians could claim over the French trappers and bushrangers was their power of endurance. Charlevoix tells us that the most keen-eyed Indian could not shoot any straighter than a Frenchman, nor steer his canoe more skilfully over a dangerous rapid. Vol. V, p. 225.

2. Nicolas Perrot wrote: "When we had descended the Calumets, we met a little below the Chats, Monsieur de la Salle, who was hunting with five or six Frenchmen."—*Miss Blair's translation*, p. 211.

the Algonquin nation, Roche-à-l'Oiseau, where the traditional ducking rite was observed on strangers,<sup>1</sup> Portage des Joachims, famous resting-place after a fifty-mile stretch with the paddle—all names that have survived the French *régime*. At Mat-tawa the troops quitted the Ottawa river and entered the waters leading to Lake Nipissing. They then paddled down the French river and along the north shore of Lake Huron, through Sault Ste. Marie to Michillimackinac, which they reached on August 1st. A fortnight later, they camped on the site now covered by the city of Chicago. There they rested previous to their final dash to the land, now known as Wisconsin, where the Fox nation dwelt.

The expedition lasted three months, but no tangible results followed the hardships of the long, tiresome journey. The Indians fled at the approach of the French troops, who had to be content with burning their cabins and destroying their harvests. After his return, De la Bretonnière resumed his work at Caughnawaga. Four years later, in 1732, he replaced de Lauzon, when the latter was appointed to take charge of all the Canadian missions.

Father de Lauzon's first care was to provide for the broadening activities of his Jesuit brethren among the tribes. Several men in the field were advancing in age; others were weakening under the inevitable hardships of their missionary careers. More important still, new missions were clamouring

1. Father Potier wrote in 1760: "*Roche-à-l'Oiseau: l'on BAPTISE vis-a-vis.*"



for labourers, especially in the vast land beyond the Great Lakes, where exploration was opening up new horizons yearly and where new Indian tribes were being discovered ready to receive the Gospel. In 1733, de Lauzon crossed the Atlantic to put the needs of the Canadian field before the Jesuits in France and to induce some of them to accompany him back to Canada. One of the new recruits was Father Luc-François Nau, who was welcomed at Caughnawaga in 1735, and who was to exercise an active apostolate there for eight years. First impressions are usually most vivid, and those penned by the young missionary, shortly after his arrival there, enable us to get a glimpse at conditions in 1735, showing that the daily village life at Caughnawaga had not changed for many years.

"It is imagined in France," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "that the Iroquois, who formerly treated so cruelly the French whom they made their captives in war, must be of ferocious aspect, and that their very sight and name should strike terror into all who encounter them. This is pure fancy. Generally speaking, you could find nowhere finer-looking men. They are better built than the French, while side by side with the Iroquois other Indians seem dwarfed. Nearly all the braves of our mission are nearer six feet in height than five. Their countenance is in keeping with their stature and their features are regular. The children especially are diminutive types of the picturesque, trans-

1. *Aulneau Collec'tion*, pp. 57-60.

parency of colour being alone wanting. Their complexion is of an olive tint, but not tawny as that of other tribes, I have met even in the streets of Bordeaux any number of men darker than our Iroquois. They would for the most part be as clear-complexioned as the French were it not for the effects of the smoke in their wigwams, which is so dense that I fail to understand how they do not lose their sight.

“The costume of the Iroquois is different from that of other tribes. Their hair is trimmed somewhat like that of the Recollect Fathers, with this difference, that they raise a bunch of the hair on the crown by means of a kind of wax mixed with vermilion and allow a few hairs to protrude above, to which they fasten a porcelain bead or so, or a feather of some bird seldom met with. Over the shirt they usually wear a garment of French fashion, with lace sewed on all the seams. When the weather is cold, or on a gala day, they wear a cloth mantle a yard and a half square, the lower border of which is trimmed with nine bands of lace. Their *mitasse*, that is, their leggings, are adorned with ribbons and a variety of flowers broidered with elk-hair dyed red or yellow. These are made to fit closely, the better to show off the elaborate finish of the work. Their moccasins are smoke-dried deerskin. Some wear silk stockings, and shoes of French make with silver buckles. Among the Indian nations all the women dress alike. You have no doubt seen the likeness of

Kateri Tekakwitha, who died in the odour of sanctity; all the squaws are similarly dressed."

Father Nau then described the ceremony of his adoption by the tribe and the conferring of a tribal name on him by which he was afterwards to be known amongst them.<sup>1</sup> "Two months after my arrival I invited the elders to a banquet. The spread consisted of a whole carcass of beef, bread in proportion, two bushels of peas and a quantity of tobacco. When all were assembled, Father de Lauzon, who has lived for many years in this mission, made a long speech for me. The Iroquois orators answered in turn. When the speech-making was over, one of the elders arose and announced that a name must be given to the black-robe, for this is the appellation by which the Jesuit missionaries are known. After having gone over the names of all the former missionaries, he determined that I should hereafter be called *Hateriata*, and I now go by no other name in the village. *Hateriata* means in Iroquois *the Brave*, the magnanimous man.<sup>2</sup> It now remained to assign me to a lodge and to adopt me into a family. You must know that in the village there are three families: that of the Bear, that of the Wolf, and that of the Tortoise. All newcomers are made

1. It is interesting to note that this custom is still in vogue at Caughnawaga. Not merely the missionaries, but many distinguished visitors are affiliated to the tribe and given an Indian name.

2. This name had already been borne by a famous Caughnawaga chief who made a remarkable speech in presence of Count Frontenac at a council of the Nations held at Laprairie in 1690.—CHARLEVOIX: *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, Vol. II, p. 61.



## RESIDENCE AT CAUGHNAWAGA

*Showing Officers' Quarters (x), added about 1754*





one of these three families. I had the honour of being enrolled into the family of the Bear."

In the spring of 1735, an interesting visit was made to Caughnawaga by Pierre Aulneau de la Touche, a young missionary, whose tragic death, a year later, has surrounded his memory with a halo of sanctity. He was one of those who arrived in Canada with Father de Lauzon, in 1734, and after a year's sojourn in Quebec, was sent to evangelize the Mandans and other tribes living on the Western prairies. On his way up the St. Lawrence he rested for two weeks with Father Nau, while awaiting the arrival of the members of La Verandrye's expedition, for whom he was to act as chaplain. In 1736, he was slain by the Sioux, together with twenty men of the expedition, on an island in the Lake of the Woods.<sup>1</sup>

1. The massacre of the twenty-one members of *Sieur Pierre Gauthier de la Verandrye's* expedition by the Sioux in 1736 is one of the sad episodes of Canadian history. Although efforts had often been made to find some remnants of the party, all traces of it remained hidden until 1907, when the ruins of Fort St. Charles were discovered a couple of miles from the mouth of Northwest Inlet, opposite Buckete Island, Minn., fifty or sixty miles from Kenora. In the following year the skeletons of the entire party were found within the area of the old fort. The remains of *la Verandrye* and *Aulneau* were discovered lying in a box nearby, the Jesuit being recognized by the collar attachment of his gown which was found beneath the skeleton. In 1889, a number of letters written by *Aulneau*, over a hundred and fifty years previously, were found in the papers of the *Aulneau* family at Bournezeau in the Vendée. These letters were translated and published by the Rev. A. E. Jones, S. J., of Montreal, in 1893, under the title of "*The Aulneau Collection*".

Among other interesting facts they inform us that, after the tragic death of *Father Aulneau*, his mother became a staunch friend—a sort of fairy godmother—of the Canadian missions and missionaries. There are letters written from *Michillimackinac*, *Lorette* and *Caughnawaga*, in which are mingled deep sympathy with the venerable mother in her grief, and gratitude to her for her gifts to the Indians. The sacrifice of her son's life in the service of the Order and her own generosity to his brethren in Canada, entitled her to some consideration from the Jesuits. Thus, when the news of the massacre reached Rome, *Michelangelo Tamburini*, General of the Order, affiliated *Madame Aulneau* to the Society of Jesus, thereby giving her a share in the suffrages and other spiritual privileges enjoyed by the Jesuits themselves.

Meanwhile the French and English in America continued to feel the becalming influence of the treaty of Utrecht. An atmosphere of peace was enveloping not only the French and their Indian allies, but the Iroquois of the cantons as well. Beauharnois could write,<sup>1</sup> in 1735, as regards the Indians, that those who were domiciled in the colony were devoted to the interests of the French, while owing to the faithful interpreters whom he had kept living among the Iroquois, the French had no enemies in the cantons. The English, it is true, had built Oswego, and were evidently determined to stay there, but as long as the Iroquois persevered in their neutrality the French felt that they were as powerless to injure Oswego as the English were to injure Niagara.

The Count de Maurepas appeared to regret this fact. "Should the Iroquois remain neutral," he wrote, "it does not seem as though they would suffer you to make an attack on Chouaguen, or the English on our post at Niagara."<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Iroquois had seemingly become preservers of the peace between the two nations after having been so long the disturbers of it. The French Court was glad to learn that Beauharnois had agents living permanently among the Iroquois to watch their manœuvring. Their reports from the cantons would determine the measures to be adopted to keep those Indians in a state of

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 1045.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 1048.

neutrality, as long as they could not be prevailed upon to take sides with the French.

There was a reason in 1736 for their strong desire to secure the co-operation of the Iroquois; the profits arising from the fur trade were very meagre. The activity of the hunters was responsible for the gradual decrease in the number of fur-bearing animals along the tributaries of the St. Lawrence and the Upper Ottawa. The order prohibiting any distribution of brandy to the Indians also seriously affected the trade. From a commercial point of view, therefore, the position of the French dealers was not an enviable one. The Iroquois had a passionate craving for intoxicants which the English were plentifully supplying to them at Oswego. By decrees of Church and State still in force, the French were not allowed to give them brandy if there was danger of their getting drunk. This was the situation which Beauharnois and Intendant Hocquart had to face. Restricted, on the one hand, by Utrecht's stipulations and, on the other, by orders from Versailles, they had no means at hand either of destroying or of interrupting the commercial relations which high prices and strong liquor were fostering between the English and the Indians.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the French kept advancing westward to new preserves. They had reached the valley of the Ohio, and were trading with several tribes there, bringing home, every season, rich cargoes of furs to the company's depot at Montreal. The English, not wishing to



be outdone in the commercial race, undertook to supplant their rivals, and with Oswego as a centre of operations, they began secret negotiations with those distant border tribes. The bait of copious supplies of brandy and the equally attractive bait of high prices, which they were ready to offer to the hunters, enabled them to get rid of many of the French traders in the West. They alienated the Cherokees and the Chickasaw tribes from their French rivals, and succeeded so well in fomenting trouble that the French had at length to defend themselves by armed force. Skirmishes took place now and then between the French and the Western Indians, and affairs reached such a crisis that, in 1739, Beauharnois was obliged to send a second expedition of French soldiers and Caughnawaga warriors to keep them in check. This effort, however, was not more successful than the one undertaken in 1728. The long journey to the Ohio valley, the weight of provisions, guns and ammunition which had to be carried thither, and consequent physical fatigue, meant ultimate failure for French arms. <sup>1</sup>

In a letter to France written from Caughnawaga, in 1740, Father Nau mentioned this second expedition, <sup>2</sup> which ended disastrously for the French, who "with the finest army ever seen in this country, and well provided with mortars and cannon, did not dare attack a rabble of savages. The Canadians alone and the Iroquois of our mission engaged

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 1098.

2. *Jesuit Relations* (Clev. edit.), Vol. LXIX, p. 47.

the enemy, slew a number and took some prisoners, but we were not in sufficient force to rout them completely." A year later, the same missionary wrote from Caughnawaga: "The Chickasaws continue to burn all the French who fall into their hands. The English who are settled among them incite them to this barbarous practice and often take part in tormenting the French more cruelly. Our Indians are always at war with the Chickasaws, and from time to time they bring in large numbers of slaves; but instead of burning them at the stake, they adopt them in the village, instruct them in our mysteries, and holy baptism places them in the way of reaching heaven. By this means our mission increases greatly every year as well as by outside families coming from a distance who willingly settle amongst us." <sup>1</sup>

With the exception of trouble on the Western border, peace was general, the colony was gradually becoming self-supporting and was advancing in prosperity. <sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the outbreak among the Chickasaws came at an opportune moment, for peace was dampening the martial ardour of the warriors of the various nations, and the spirit of independence was showing itself more openly. The Iroquois, as usual, recognized no treaty; for them there were no boundary lines between English and French; they came and went, visited relatives, and traded where and with whom they pleased. The call of flesh and blood

1. *Aulneau Collection*, p. 140.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 1058.

had never been crushed in them; it was listened to as eagerly in the eighteenth century as it had been in the seventeenth. Although they still held firmly to the faith they had received from the French missionaries, they recognized no national frontiers. Commercial intercourse accentuated this independent spirit, breaking down any artificial barriers that existed. But Beauharnois had his ear to the ground, and the leanings toward the English, which he thought some of the Christian Indians were developing, was giving him anxiety.

This troubled state of mind was intensified when, in 1741, a band of Caughnawagas paid him a visit to inform him that they had received a wampum belt from Albany, together with an invitation to attend a meeting there; and as they were desirous of learning the nature of the message the English wished to convey, they came to comply with the formality of notifying him of their intended visit. Suspecting that something unseemly was at the bottom of their demand, the governor told them that he would reply later. But they insisted on a prompt answer, alleging as a reason that the season was advancing and that they wished to go to Albany to obtain goods before the cold weather set in. Suspecting that the missionaries at Caughnawaga had something to do with the proposed visit, although it is difficult to discover any grounds for such a suspicion, the governor ordered de Lauzon to come to Montreal and to bring the chiefs with him. As soon as they were ushered into the official presence, they

had to listen to an impassioned harangue which has been preserved for us. It was undoubtedly a picturesque sight to see His Excellency Charles de la Boische, Marquis de Beauharnois, Commander of the Military Order of St. Louis, Governor-general of New France, standing before a group of dusky Caughnawaga chiefs and apostrophizing them after this fashion:

“Children, ought I to call you children, and give you so dear a name, you who are endeavouring to uproot in my bosom the emotions and feelings of a father? I am that father whom you ought to cherish, especially on account of my kindness, since I have exhausted on you, in preference to all my other children, whatever the most tender friendship can inspire in favour of those who would render themselves deserving of it. Tell me what I have not done to secure your affection. I showered down presents on your village on every occasion. I fed you all during the famine. I rewarded you during the war. I fitted you out completely when you went to fight for me. I supported your families during your absence. I clothed and armed you on your departure and on your return. I carried my indulgence so far as to have your horses fed during your absence. What more shall I say? I assisted you on every occasion. I had your arms repaired in all seasons. I furnished you canoes for every voyage whenever you asked for them. In a word, I unsparingly stripped myself of everything to satisfy you. Are not these the sentiments and acts of a good father who is entitled to exact



a sincere return from those whom he ought to reckon among the number of his friends? What have you done to deserve all these favours? Answer me, unnatural children! You blush and feel as much difficulty in confessing your fault as ingratitude in committing it. I feel pain for you while pronouncing it, and you ought to die of shame that it has reached my ears. How came you to consent to receive from a foreign and hostile hand a belt which is injurious to the interests of a father to whom you are under so many obligations?"

And after heaping reproaches upon their heads for having tried to shake the fidelity of the Abenakis of St. Francis and for having sent some of their warriors to the Chickasaws, he went on:

"Not content with all these wanderings, which ought to make you die of shame, you have the impudence to come and tell me in council that you are going to Albany! You would undertake this voyage without consulting me, at a time when I sent you notice that I needed you here for reasons which do not accord with your reasons for departure; at a time when your families, who are dying of hunger, are just experiencing all my affection, inasmuch as I have caused them to be supplied with flour, powder and lead, so as to enable them to attend to the harvest. Count no longer on my friendship if you continue to listen to bad advice; you cannot avoid this misfortune, except by breaking up the close relations you hold with the English. They are your enemies

and mine the moment they inspire you with sentiments which conflict with your duty to me. Those connections are, moreover, fatal to your conscience and to the general trade of the country. I require you to abandon entirely and in good faith the voyage indicated by the belt. I require at the same time that the belt be brought to me in order that it may be burnt, so that not a vestige of it remain. On these conditions and according to your future conduct I will reëstablish you in your original position near me and will restore you to my friendship that you have lost through your fault.”<sup>1</sup>

At first the harsh speech in which Beauharnois displayed his official sorrow at the straying of his Caughnawaga children greatly displeased them, for “no other governor had ever treated them in such a manner.” They expressed regret for their errors, however, threw the blame on the Indians of the Lake of Two Mountains, and, shortly after, the governor had the satisfaction of sending them a message to say that he was again pleased with them, that he had buried all the past, that he regarded them now as his children indeed, and that he could return to Quebec happy. He appointed Great Arrow captain and chief of the Indian council, with instructions to keep him informed of everything that passed in the village. As a parting recommendation, he urged all to listen to the black-robés “whenever they would speak to them

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, pp. 1073-74.

of prayer and do all they would tell them to do on this subject."

Caughnawaga was growing in population, but the number of its missionaries was decreasing, Nau and De la Bretonnière being the only men available to do work formerly done by five. In 1740, De la Bretonnière was again appointed chaplain and accompanied the three hundred warriors who joined the expedition against the Chickasaws on the Mississippi. A false rumour was spread that he would go back to France by way of New Orleans and might not return to Canada. When de Lauzon gave up the superiority of the Canadian Jesuits, in 1740, he went back to Caughnawaga; but the health of this accomplished missionary was broken and he was nearing the end of a busy life. After a few months' service, he returned to Quebec, where he died, September 5th, 1742. His loss was acutely felt by his companion at Caughnawaga. "He was the best friend I had in Canada," wrote Father Nau to Madame Aulneau, mother of the victim of the Sioux; "I have been unable to sear the wound caused by his death. It still bleeds and will bleed for many a day yet. Daily and hourly every object that meets my gaze reminds me of the loss I have sustained." <sup>1</sup>

Father Nau was now alone in the management of the mission, with sick-calls to attend to, two or three leagues away, over horrible roads in all kinds of weather. He had, besides, he tells us, the res-

1. *Aulneau Collection*, p. 155.

possibility of a French parish of four hundred souls, "more difficult to manage than the Indians." He was infirm, being almost blind, and unable to see his way ten steps ahead or to distinguish a man from the trunk of a tree. He complained of vertigo, "which has made me make more than one perilous step," he wrote, "and may end by breaking my neck." Happily, in 1743, he was joined by Father Jean-Baptiste Tournois, a young Fleming, "well-deserving and affable," whose service would be available after he had acquired a knowledge of the Iroquois tongue.

Two years previously, when Beauharnois asked the Caughnawaga chiefs to do all the black-robos would tell them to do on the subject of prayer, he plainly hinted that there were other matters in which they were not expected to be so obedient. Writing to the Count de Maurepas, he blamed the missionaries and some French traders for having given "English hearts" to the Indians of Caughnawaga. "Sault St. Louis," he told the French minister, "has become a sort of republic, and it is here alone that foreign trade is carried on at present." The only proof he could allege for this assertion was the solitary fact that a Montreal merchant had paid a certain Sieur Quesnel, of Lachine, eight hundred livres for beaver skins, six hundred of which went to the Desautiers sisters who kept a store at Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup> His suspicion of underhand work was strengthened when he learned that those women had not turned in a

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 1071.



beaver skin to the West India Company in fifteen years, and he surmised that the money received from Quesnel went to pay for furs which eventually found their way to Albany.

The persecution of the Desauniers by Beauharnois and the powerful fur company forms one of the most interesting episodes in the history of Caughnawaga in the eighteenth century. Three sisters, Marguerite, Marie, and Magdeleine Desauniers, had evolved an ingenious method of preparing for foreign markets the ginseng plant, discovered by Father Lafitau, a few years earlier.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1727 they had secured a concession of land in the village which, several years later, was enclosed within the walls of the fort. They had built a store on this land and had for many years been deriving a revenue from the exportation of the ginseng plant. No document has ever been produced to prove that they bartered a fur of any kind or had encroached in any way upon the rights of the West India Company. Beauharnois' successor acknowledged, after personal examination, that the goods—food, white blankets and other French merchandise<sup>2</sup>—which the enterprising sisters traded in exchange for the ginseng were of better quality and were sold to the Indians on cheaper terms than could be had from the fur company's depot in Montreal; in a word, the Desauniers sisters were engaged in legitimate trade and the mis-

1. Canadian Archives: Corresp. Fol. 97.

2. "Des vivres, des couvertures blanches et autres marchandises françaises, voilà tout!"—*De Lauzon to the Governor of Three Rivers.*

sionaries felt that they could not interfere with them.

After they had been in active business for many years, and when complaints of contraband trade began to be launched against them, Father de Lauzon wrote: "I must be just to them; I would not have allowed them to remain in the village had they failed in this essential matter." Three other Jesuits testified that "they edified all by their piety and their honesty in trade. They were charitable to the poor and the sick; they were zealous for the welfare of the Indians." Sieur de Ramezay wrote of them that they knew the Iroquois tongue better than his own official interpreter, and he had to thank them for the services they had rendered him during the seven or eight months he commanded the garrison at Caughnawaga. Other French officials, including M. Varin, the intendant, had a good word to say for them. But all their noble qualities made no impression on the French governor.<sup>1</sup> Contraband trade in beaver—even the suspicion of indulging in it—was an unpardonable offence in the colony in those days. The Desauniers had lost favour with Beauharnois who, not satisfied with finding fault with them and their methods, also accused the Jesuit Order of sharing in the profits of their store. In his letter to the Count de Maurepas he had the hardihood to assert that it was stated publicly by everybody in the colony that the enlargement of the college at Quebec, which the Jesuits had

1. Canadian Archives: Corresp. Fol. 97.

completed in 1724, had been accomplished with money gained as a result of fraudulent trading with the Indians. He insinuated that a remedy might be found if the missionaries, "and those in league with them," were removed from the village; he did not dare to do anything, however, without first receiving instructions from France.

Caughnawaga and its people had evidently lost the sympathy of the French governor, notwithstanding the loyalty and good will they had shown on so many occasions. Father de Lauzon, writing in 1741, asserted that "the Iroquois of the village had always given signs of attachment to the French." They had fought against the English and against their own nation in league with the English. Frontenac, de Callière and de Vaudreuil had been satisfied with their services; Beauharnois himself had employed them against the Chickasaws, and in two expeditions against the Foxes. They had successfully opposed the erection, on Lake Champlain, of a fort which the English had intended to build in order to capture the French trade.

Realizing all that the fort meant at Choueguen, as Oswego was called, in preventing French access to the Western country, they had offered their services to the governor for the purpose of destroying that post as soon as it was built. All this was not sufficient to gain the good will of Beauharnois, who continued to carry on a silent campaign against Caughnawaga by calumnies in letters to the French Court and by insinuations which,

he may have hoped, would ultimately influence the minds of the authorities in France. What particularly grieved de Lauzon was the accusation that the Jesuits had been profiting personally by contraband trade with Albany, and in order to justify them, he wrote a long letter to M. de Vaudreuil, Governor of Three Rivers, to be transmitted to the Comte de Maurepas, wherein he showed how baseless were the charges made against the honour and integrity of his brethren in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

The missionary who had to bear all the odium of these accusations was the Flemish Jesuit, Jean-Baptiste Tournois, who had succeeded Father Nau as superior at Caughnawaga in 1744, when the latter returned to France. He was a man of great strength of character, and his ascendancy over the Indians was shown in the unbending way in which he prevented the introduction of brandy into the village. He found the Desauniers sisters actively engaged in business when he went there. The rumours afloat obliged him to make an examination of their trading methods, but he could not find anything improper in them. The Indians who dealt with them not only saved many useless visits to Montreal, where they usually indulged in liquor, but they also obtained better and cheaper goods in Caughnawaga than they could in Montreal. In view of all this, Tournois wisely kept his own counsel; he let his Indians encourage home trade. His silence was resented

1. This document is reprinted by De Rochemonteix in *Les Jésuites et la Nouvelle France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Vol. II, pp. 245-258.



by the conscienceless officials of the French fur company, who made him the target of their resentment and resolved to secure his banishment.

Meanwhile Intendant Hocquart had sent spies to make a secret investigation, and although they had been unable to find any trace of contraband fur trade, the report which the intendant himself sent to France had the effect the fur company desired; the Desauniers' store could no longer be tolerated in the village, and an order to close it was issued from Versailles. The West India Company, which was the prime mover in this petty and uninteresting squabble, asked Tournois to carry out the edict of suppression. But the Jesuit refused to have anything to do with the disagreeable task, and Hocquart himself had to give the necessary orders to Douville, the commandant of the garrison,

This contraband trouble at Caughnawaga was only a passing cloud in a clear sky; other responsibilities were soon to occupy the minds of the colonial officials. The Marquis de Beauharnois died in 1746, and the Marquis de la Jonquière, an admiral of the French fleet, was named to succeed him; but while on his way to Canada he was made prisoner during a combat with an English squadron off Cape Finisterre, and he did not reach Quebec until three years later. His place was filled temporarily by the Comte de Galissonnière, who did not allow any accusation of illicit trading with Albany and the English to stand

in the way of employing the warriors of Caughnawaga.

The excitement created in the colony by the capture of Louisburg in June, 1745, had already given the Iroquois the opportunity sought for of renewing their warlike ardour. Scouting parties made up exclusively of Indians from Caughnawaga had begun to attack settlements in the neighbourhood of Boston. They were also found prowling around Albany, Saratoga, Oswego, and other English posts, harassing the inhabitants in every way possible. During the years 1746 and 1747, no less than seventeen expeditions, under the leadership of Ontassago, Theasotin, Ganiengoton, and other chiefs, were fitted out and sent from Caughnawaga to do all the damage they could in their own Indian fashion.<sup>1</sup> The usual results of these outings were a few scalps hanging from the belts of the returned warriors or a few prisoners led back to the village, not to die at the stake, as was the custom in former days, but to be adopted by one or other of the tribal clans.

However, not all the Indians of the village were as zealous as the expeditionary warriors. There was a lukewarm element which had continually to be counted with and caused the French considerable uneasiness. In 1747, for instance, Mohawks from the cantons prowled along the frontier of the colony, awaiting opportunities to swoop down upon stragglers. A band had seized eight persons and killed one child near the little

1. *Docs. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, pp. 32-33.

rapid below Chambly. Lieutenant de Vassant, commandant of Ste-Therèse, immediately sent a detachment to the Au Sable river to intercept their passage. He learned later that they were probably encamped above Chateauguay, awaiting a favourable moment to ravage the Island of Montreal. Sieur de Beaucourt, Governor of Montreal, was at once notified, and at midnight the firing of shot-guns and the beating of drums drew the population to the Place d'Armes, where a detachment of two hundred men was quickly organized to advance and repel the enemy.

"It was not thought proper," we read in the *Journal of Occurrences*, "to invite the Iroquois of the Sault to accompany the expedition, as it was feared at Montreal that they would be treacherous and favour the Mohawks in their incursions on our settlements; they are even suspected of giving the enemy notice when we are in pursuit of them by firing three shots when the detachments are approaching their camps."<sup>1</sup> The rapidity with which the defensive movement was made, however, completely surprised the enemy and rendered their hostile intentions abortive. The Mohawks, among whom were some white men, quickly retreated, but they were followed as far as the Cascades, when sixteen of their number were captured. Only twenty-four of the original detachment returned to Albany. The rest perished in the woods. The prisoners were brought to Caughnawaga, where, according to an ancient custom, they were obliged

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 102.

to sing and dance. They were then conveyed to Quebec, in irons, under the care of Chevalier La Corne. Meanwhile the "well-studied messages," which were sent to the lukewarm element, were respectfully received. They were ordered to come to Montreal to give an account of their conduct. It is true they gave "very lame excuses," but they presented a belt in the name of the entire village, affirming an intention of going to attack the Mohawks and promising to behave better in the future.

Incursions into the colony, now becoming more frequent, might be expected at any time. At Chateauguay the Mohawks killed a woman and scalped her husband. Caughnawaga itself was very vulnerable. Circumstances had indeed changed, and the missionaries saw that the time had come to fortify the village. The objections of 1721 lost their cogency in 1747, and the authorities were urged to begin work at once. This they undoubtedly did, for we read in the *Journal of Occurrences* for 1746-1747 that the deputies of Sault St. Louis had their demands satisfied with regard to the stone enclosure they had formerly requested for the village. A garrison composed of M. de la Valtrie, "a brave captain and worthy, quiet man," and some soldiers were sent to live there.<sup>1</sup>

The stone wall around the village was apparently something more elaborate than that called for in Chaussegros de Lery's plan of 1724; it replaced the wooden palisade which had sufficed

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 96.



for a quarter of a century. In the archives at Caughnawaga may be seen a copy taken from the original plan which is preserved at Ottawa. The fort formed an oblong square, longer in the direction of north and south, with a sally port projecting at each corner. The main gate faced the east, and loopholes for defence against enemies approaching by water were built into the wall, a structure ten feet high, which ran along the river front. Within the fort were the church, the officers' quarters which formed part of the missionaries' residence, the guard-house and the powder magazine, and at the southeast corner stood the famous store belonging to the Desauniers, the foundations of which may still be seen. A large portion of the stone wall, which was not completed until 1754,<sup>1</sup> still exists as a precious relic of the French occupation, but much of this historic fort has been demolished to make way for modern improvements. The wooden palisade has long since disappeared.<sup>2</sup>

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle made between France and England, in 1748, brought about the usual exchange of prisoners in their American possessions, and steps were taken to send those held in the French colony back to their homes. Strange to say, this operation was not always an easy one, especially in the Indian villages, nor was it welcome to many of the English prison-

1. *Docs. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 96.

2. It is doubtful whether the entire plan of 1754 was ever carried out or not. Modern investigators are inclined to think that the stone wall was never built in front of the residence.

ers who had reasons of their own for staying with the Indians. The Swedish scientist, Peter Kalm, who visited Canada in 1749, was struck with the facility with which the assimilation of Indians and whites was effected. He gave an interesting example which he ran across during a visit to the Hurons at Lorette.

"In order to facilitate my visit there," he wrote, "the governor sent an Indian to serve me as a guide. This Indian was an Englishman by birth who had been seized by the Indians when he was only a small boy, thirty years before, and adopted by them. According to their custom, he took the place of one of their own who had been killed by the enemy. Since that time he has always stayed with them. Having become a Roman Catholic, he married a squaw, dressed like an Indian and spoke English, French and several Indian tongues." <sup>1</sup>

Kalm learned that in the wars between the French and the English, the Indians allied to the French took many prisoners of both sexes from the English colonies, and adopted them, and later on married them among their own people. He therefore concluded that, even in 1749, Indian blood in Canada was greatly mixed, and that many of the Indians then living might claim English ancestry. The greater number of the English prisoners adopted by the Indians, es-

1. *Voyage en Amérique*, p. 116. Probably the Edward Cheaole, (Sewell?) who is mentioned in the General Return of English prisoners detained in Canada in 1750: "Married a squaw among the Hurons of Lorette and desired to live with them." *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 214.

pecially the young men, resisted the solicitations of their relatives when asked to return to their own country, preferring Indian life to the charm of their old homes. Kalm further remarked that those adopted Englishmen dressed like Indians and did everything in Indian fashion, so that it was not easy to distinguish them from the real Indian, except by their complexion, which was a little paler. Other similar cases are recorded in the Minutes of 1750 relating to the exchange of prisoners of war. For instance, an Englishman known as John would not go back to Albany for the reason that he had been converted by Father Aubéry at the Abenakis mission of St. Francis, and he wished to practise his religion in peace. Simon Yort, Philip Philipson, Thomas Volmer and Jacob Suitzer—probably the four Dutchmen “dressed like Indians,” who were seized in 1747—preferred to remain with the Indians of Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, at the Lake of Two Mountains, two white men, who were offered their freedom, would not abandon their Indian wives. Other cases are on record of prisoners of war who, having married into the tribe of their captors, would not leave their wives and children. The Nipissings had become so attached to some of their prisoners that they were unwilling to allow them to leave at any price.<sup>2</sup> Other prisoners refused their liberty, knowing that they would have to work for many years to redeem the ransoms paid

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 110.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. X, p. 214.

for them. "The English prisoner Delisle," wrote Sieur Douville, commandant at Caughnawaga in 1750, in a letter addressed to the governor-general, "came to see me to tell me that I may have the honour of informing you that he does not wish to return home; that when he told the English he would go he had not sufficiently reflected. His father is no longer alive and the laws of his country are such that the one who has to be ransomed on borrowed money is bound down to work until he pays back the amount; that he preferred being a slave among the Indians rather than live among his own people where there is no religion."<sup>1</sup> He, therefore, decided to remain with the Indians by whom he was well treated.

This was more or less the state of affairs in Canada in 1749, when La Jonquière arrived to take up the reins of government. He found Englishmen and Germans being adopted into the very heart of the colony, and the French could do nothing to prevent it. The insinuations of his predecessors regarding contraband trade with the English had evidently made a deep impression in France. A letter reached him from de Rouillé, Minister of Marine and Colonies, hardly a month after his arrival in Canada, containing strict orders to put an end to the trade which the Iroquois of Caughnawaga had been carrying on with Albany for a long time. The fur company was again showing its hand. Upheld by the colonial officials,

1. This voluntary exile, James Delisle, is presumably the ancestor of a numerous posterity at Caughnawaga.—*Caughnawaga Archives*.



it would brook no opposition to its monopoly in beaver skins, nor would it offer reasonable prices for them; while the Indians, on the other hand, were keen about their own interests, and were seeking bargains wherever they could be found.

Despite the company's efforts to stop him, the Indians continued to trade at Albany, for the reason, they themselves alleged, that the English merchants were treating them better than the French. La Jonquière wished to test the truth of this assertion, and one of his first official acts was a visit to Caughnawaga. "The Indians received me well and with military honours," he wrote to the minister. "I visited all the chiefs and the warriors in their cabins, the greater number of which are as well built as in the French settlements. Many of their stores are filled with English goods, and they are very shrewd in their dealings. I did not fail to discourage this foreign trade, but the French themselves have set the bad example."<sup>1</sup>

In a private interview, Father Tournois, the friend and protector of his converts, told La Jonquière that in Albany the Indians could buy a whole piece of cloth for thirty pounds of beaver, while in Montreal six pounds of beaver are asked for a blanket." The governor had to admit the truth of this assertion, no matter how disagreeable. "Our cloth is poor stuff," he also admitted, "especially what has been imported this year. I compared it with English samples and find that

1. Canadian Archives: Corresp. Fol. 97, p. 120.

these are of superior quality.”<sup>1</sup> But there was no redress; the reign of Bigot and his robbers was at hand.

M. Douville, the commandant of the little French garrison at Caughnawaga, one of the intendant's trusted agents, indulged so brazenly in contraband trade that the chiefs of the village, disgusted at his conduct, sent him back their official medals and resolved to have no further dealings with him.<sup>2</sup> The exploitation of both whites and Indians had already begun and was to continue until the end of the French *régime*, and because the Jesuits would not favour this brigandage they had to suffer. By order of La Jonquière, who was more daring in his methods than either Beauharnois or La Galissonnière, Father Tournois, after his nine years of service, was placed aboard the *Chariot Royal* and banished to France.

The dismissal of this excellent missionary, without having consulted the Superior of his Order or the Bishop of Quebec, was an ignoble act on the part of a French governor, whose duty it was to respect the Church and its ministers. His excuse for his hasty action was the difficulty of reaching the religious authorities, who were in

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les J.J. et la N. France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, II, p. 34.

2. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 40. In a letter addressed to Versailles, La Jonquière wrote: "Several times during the past winter I spoke to Father Marcol, superior of the Jesuits in the colony, about this trade. He repeatedly begged me to remove the garrison under pretext that M. de la Galissonnière had promised to do so as soon as peace was proclaimed. I replied that I would take away the soldiers, but that I would allow M. Douville, the commandant, to remain. He then told me that it was the commandant himself that carried on the trade." *Can. Arch.: Corr. Gen.*, Vol. 92, p. 132.

Quebec, and the affair required to be disposed of immediately, otherwise he would have been obliged to deal severely with the Indians.<sup>1</sup> This officious meddling, however, lowered the prestige of religion in the minds of the Indians and had a very bad effect on their conduct. Before Tournois' successor could be appointed, the tone of the mission had changed rapidly and in an alarming way. Liquor had been secretly introduced into the village and its abuse had become prevalent among the weak-willed Indians. The energetic Tournois was gone and no one seemed to possess the secret of keeping them in the narrow path.

The Marquis Duquesne, who succeeded La Jonquière in 1752, tried to repair the gross injustice committed against the banished missionary. His friendship for his predecessor, he tells us, kept him silent for two years; but in 1754, the welfare of the Caughnawaga Indians, no less than his desire that justice should prevail, urged him to acquaint de Machault, Minister of Marine and Colonies, with his sentiments on this subject: "I was too much attached to the late M. de la Jonquière to show a lack of veneration for his memory, but I must tell you in all truth that he was taken off his guard by ill-disposed persons who urged him to commit this act of violence. From all the information which I have gathered, I am satisfied that Father Tournois governed the mission of Sault St. Louis better than anyone else, and it appears to me important that you should

1. Canadian Archives, Corr. Fol. 97, p. 194.

permit him to return, because this village, which has grown considerably, has greater need than ever to be governed by one who has the talent to make himself feared and loved.”<sup>1</sup> Duquesne felt so keenly over this disagreeable episode that he wrote again to the Minister, in 1754, to the effect that “never was there greater need than now to send Father Tournois back.”<sup>2</sup> The excellent missionary never returned to Canada. He died at Orchies, in France, after other years of fruitful ministry.

Father de la Bretonnière, associated with Tournois for several years at Caughnawaga, was named to succeed him, but the Indians insisted on having Father René Floquet as their spiritual superior.<sup>3</sup> This missionary was given to them, but he did not have the desired influence over them. Accordingly, after a few months he was sent to the college at Quebec and was replaced by Father de Gonnor, who had as assistants Antoine Gordan,

1. DE ROCHEMONTEIX: *Les J.J. et la N. France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, II. p. 48.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 267.

3. In a letter from Governor de la Jonquière to the Minister, dated July 25, 1750, we read: “Father St-Pé, the superior at Montreal, destined de la Bretonnière to replace Father Tournois; meanwhile the Indians having sent me a wampum belt asking for Father Floquet, I have granted their request.” Father René Floquet was born at Paris in 1716 and entered the Jesuit Order in 1734. After a period of teaching at Quimper, in Finisterre, he studied theology for four years and arrived in Canada in 1744. He became the superior of the residence in Montreal, in 1757, and was still there in 1775 when General Montgomery invaded the town. His relations with the Americans, during their occupation of Montreal, and, in 1776, with the Franklin embassy, compromised him in the eyes of Monsignor Briand, Bishop of Quebec. A letter still extant, dated November 29, 1776, written by Father Floquet, expressed his regret at having failed to listen to the appeal of the Bishop to the spirit of loyalty of the Canadian clergy. Father Floquet died at Quebec on October 10, 1782.



Yves le Saux<sup>1</sup> and Pierre Billiard.<sup>2</sup> De Gonnor and Le Saux remained at Caughnawaga only a short time. Gordan became superior in 1755, and was replaced, two years later, by Jean-Baptiste de Neuville, whose practical sermons and instructions in the Iroquois tongue, although written over a hundred and fifty years ago, are still popular at the mission. De Neuville was aided in his ministry by Father Claude Viot, afterwards slain by an Iroquois, in 1757, near Fort Niagara.

Duquesne had been instructed to carry out a policy somewhat different from the one which had hitherto been followed with regard to warfare among the Indians. The plan up to this time had been to weaken the tribes by urging them to fight among themselves. He was told that such a plan was good enough in the early days of the colony, when the Indians were powerful and the colonists were few. But now, owing to the conditions to which those tribes were reduced, it would be more useful for the French to act the part of peacemakers and defenders. The Indians would thus become more attached to them, the colony

1. Yves le Saux was born at Tréquier in 1718, and entered the Jesuit Order at the age of twenty. He came to Quebec to teach belles-lettres and rhetoric. He returned to France in 1714, and held a professor's chair in the college at Orleans. After his ordination he came again to Quebec in 1751, and after a year at Caughnawaga he went back to France, in August, 1753, with Derwilliers and the Abbé Piquet on the *Algonquin*, and died in Rome, July 24, 1754.

2. Father Pierre Robert Billiard was born in Paris, in 1723, and entered the novitiate of the Order in that city in 1743. After his philosophical studies at the college of St. Louis and at Laflèche, he was sent to Quebec, where he taught for several years. He returned to France for his theology. After his ordination to the priesthood he crossed the Atlantic in 1753. He was sent to Caughnawaga the following year and exercised his ministry there and at St. Regis until his death, July 26, 1757.

would be quieter, and the Government would be saved considerable expense. Cases might occur, however, in which it would be proper to urge the waging of war against certain nations attached to the English; but on these occasions he should first try to gain over such nations by reconciling them to the French; this done he should try to make sure that the allies did not suffer too severely in such wars.<sup>1</sup>

The new policy was more humane and was therefore more successful, for notwithstanding Duquesne's many reasons for being displeased with the Five Nations which, he well knew, were playing a double rôle, he tried to be agreeable to them, realizing that flattery rightly directed could be made to work wonders among those half-civilized red men. He aimed at bringing the Iroquois into closer relations with the French colony, thus reducing the number of those who might ultimately become English allies. In a Montreal conference with a number of Mohawk delegates, in October, 1754, he suggested the idea of quitting the cantons, not to live in Caughnawaga, but in another village which might be established nearer the border line of the two provinces.

The soil around the old village was growing poorer every year and was becoming less fit for cultivation; in fact, several Christian families were planning to go elsewhere in order to make a living. Duquesne proposed that the canton Indians, who would accept his invitation, should unite with those

1. *Docs. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 244.

families, settle down somewhere and form a new mission. His proposal met with the approbation of the visiting delegates. "My plan with the Mohawks is succeeding admirably," he wrote to Machault, "but they cannot settle in the village of Sault St. Louis, seeing that the lands in that quarter are exhausted. More than thirty families belonging to the mission, being unable to gather enough to feed themselves, are going to live at Lake St. Francis, twenty leagues above Montreal on the south side, where the soil is very good. The Mohawks have agreed to go and settle in the village with these thirty families, whither a missionary will accompany them. This change will cost the king only the erection of a saw-mill which will furnish the Indians abundant material to build their cabins; it will be a great advantage to the colony insofar as it will be easy in time of war to be informed of all that may occur in the direction of Oswego. Besides, La Presentation,<sup>1</sup> and this new mission on Lake St. Francis, Sault St. Louis and the Lake of Two Mountains will form a barrier which should protect the Government of Montreal against all incursions."<sup>2</sup>

In a second letter he revealed other motives which induced him to allow the missionaries a free hand in the establishment of a new village. It was to attract those Mohawks who were inclined to settle among the French but who showed a repugnance to living at Caughnawaga, either

1. The site of the present city of Ogdenburg.

2. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 266-267.

because the land there was no longer fertile or because they remarked that brandy was as abundant among the "praying brethren" as among the English. His intention had never been to take the Indians away from Caughnawaga and place them elsewhere; he merely wished to find a spot for the Mohawks and other Indians of the Five Nations who desired to settle in the colony and who had already taken steps in that direction. "I have reported to the Court," he wrote, "the necessity there was of drawing the Mohawks to the place they ask of me, inasmuch as Father Billiard and M. Varin demanded no larger sum than one hundred pistoles for building purposes; with that amount they were willing to undertake all the rest." <sup>1</sup>

The mission at Lake St. Francis appears to have been established in 1755. Father Gordan, superior at Caughnawaga, <sup>2</sup> aided by Billiard, who was to be the first spiritual guide of the new enterprise, superintended the removal of the Indians. The beginnings, however, were slow, for according to a tradition, the village was only formed in 1759. It was placed under the patronage of St. John Francis Regis, a Jesuit of the seventeenth century who had distinguished himself for his heroic zeal

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 301.

2. Father Antoine Gordan, founder of the St. Regis mission, on Lake St. Francis, was born at Bourg-en-Bresse, in 1717, and entered the Jesuit novitiate at Lyons in 1735. He taught grammar, belles-lettres and rhetoric at Nîmes for six years. After a year of philosophy and four years of theology at Lyons, he came to Canada in 1748. Besides his active work at Caughnawaga and St. Regis, he exercised his ministry at Quebec and Montreal. He died in Montreal, June 30, 1779.



among the poor in France, and who had been canonized by Clement XII, in 1737. The fact that this saint had asked to be sent to the Canadian missions, may have led to his selection as patron of the new village. As a pledge of good will toward their departing brethren, the Caughnawaga Indians made them a gift of some precious relics, namely, the skull and a few of the bones of their saintly sister, Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks. These relics were deposited in the new chapel at St. Regis and were held in great veneration.

The removal of the Indians to Lake St. Francis was perhaps the last official act of the Marquis Duquesne before he was succeeded by the Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnal, the son of a former governor of the same name. During the three years of his administration, Duquesne had been a friend and defender of both whites and Indians in the heart of the colony, but the most salient feature of his governorship was the attempt he made to fortify the French position along the Ohio river, to offset the English who were working hard to secure the upper hand in that region. The arrival of General Braddock and his two regiments on their way to the Ohio Valley, in the spring of 1755, proved that England not merely intended to push her claims along the Western frontier, but even intended, if necessary, to attack the whole colony; and the arrival of seven French regiments from France under Baron Dieskau, that same year, showed that France was determined to resist the English.

The Seven Years' War, which was to end with the downfall of the French, gave the Indians a chance to show which flag they preferred. Realizing their value as allies, the French began by making strenuous efforts to capture their good will, but, if we except the tribe which Montcalm afterwards, in a letter to Bourlemaque, called the "faithful Oneidas," the co-operation of the Iroquois Confederacy was not worth considering. While it was hoped that at least the Iroquois of Caughnawaga would show their loyalty to the French, their lack of fighting enthusiasm from the very beginning of the campaign gave the French General Dieskau a rather poor opinion of them.

Six hundred Indians accompanied his army, when he made his first move in the direction of Lake Champlain, but after his defeat at Fort George by Sir William Johnson, in September, 1755, he complained bitterly about their conduct. "Before quitting Montreal," he wrote, "I had several reasons for suspecting the fidelity of the domiciliated Iroquois, both of Sault St. Louis and Lake of Two Mountains, whose number exceeded three hundred, making up half the Indians that had been given me. I represented it repeatedly to M. de Vaudreuil who would never admit it, but hardly had I arrived at Fort St. Frederic than I had occasion to furnish him with still stronger proofs thereof." <sup>1</sup>

Dieskau complained that during a period of more than fifteen days, when he was encamped

1. *Docs. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 316.

near Fort St. Frederic, those Indians put all sorts of difficulties in his way. They refused to furnish him with scouts or to act as such themselves, and sometimes they even deceived his soldiers who were sent out with them to bring back news of the movements of the enemy. When he started to attack Fort Lydius, the Iroquois warriors refused to march; when they were prevailed upon to do so, it was only to lead General Dieskau astray; and even when he thought he was about to surprise the enemy he was still three miles from the fort. He was captured at Fort George, and while still a prisoner he continued to blame the treachery of the Iroquois for his misfortune. "Our affair was well begun," he wrote to Governor de Vaudreuil, "but as soon as the Iroquois perceived some Mohawks, they came to a dead halt. I prophesied to you, Sir, that they would play some scurvy trick; it is unfortunate for me that I have been such a good prophet." The call of Indian blood was as eloquent as ever. Such great figures as Chief Hendrick and Sir William Johnson, leading men of their nation against Dieskau and the French, will explain the conduct of the Caughnawagas in the campaign of 1755.

In July, 1756, an Indian council was convened at Montreal. This council was described by Chevalier de Lévis as "the most memorable ever held in Canada, as well for the number of ambassadors and the topics discussed as for the good will shown by the Five Nations." <sup>1</sup> All the Caugh-

1. *Journal des Compagnes*, p. 79.

nawaga chiefs were present. There were also delegates from the various allied tribes, such as the Nipissings, Abenakis, Algonquins, Ottawas, and Pottawotamies. The Iroquois delegates, representing the Oneidas, Cayugas and Cherokees, had already arrived and had been sent to Caughnawaga to await the coming of their Onondaga and Seneca neighbours, who were also to take part in the deliberations.

An awkward incident nearly wrecked all Vaudreuil's plans. It was the custom during the French *régime* to welcome Indian delegates with a certain amount of ceremony. Usually an interpreter was sent out to meet them with a wampum belt from the governor, and five volleys from a cannon saluted them on their arrival. On this occasion no interpreter met the Iroquois delegates and no salute was fired. They took offence at this lack of aboriginal etiquette, and Vaudreuil had to smooth matters over by explaining the reason of the omission. If the usual ceremony had not been observed at their arrival it was really the fault of the delegates themselves. They had asked that food should be sent to them at Caughnawaga in order that they might be able to stay there longer; and they arrived in Montreal when they were not expected.<sup>1</sup>

When this famous council, which was to sit seventeen days, settled down to work, the successor of Duquesne showed how unfavourably he was impressed with the facility with which the

1. *Journal de Montcalm*, p. 123.



Iroquois turned towards the English, especially at such critical moments when all the Indians devoted to the French should keep together. A wily Onondaga chieftain, trying to justify this lack of zeal in recent years, remarked that when his people perceived that the English were threatening, it made a deep impression on them—they became abashed at the scowling looks of the English; but when the French saw fit to take up the belt of peace, they did likewise; his people therefore could not choose sides.

This sort of subterfuge did not please Vaudreuil, who told the Indians plainly that he wished all underhand relations and visiting to cease. He reproached the Mohawks for listening to the coaxing of Sir William Johnson, "whose words made all their villages tremble." "I am persuaded," he declared, "that the majority of the children of the Five Nations would be delighted were the English to conquer us, and if you assert that you would not, you utter words contrary to your true sentiments. You pretend to be friends of both the French and the English in order to obtain what you want from both sides; this makes you invent lies that upright men would never think of. Could you believe that my children of Sault St. Louis, who are incorruptible, would have been capable of abandoning their religion, their fathers and their lands, to become slaves of Englishmen? You have invited four of the chiefs of the Sault and the Lake to go with you to sit on your mat and speak of business.

Do you not know that these are tricks which your brother the Englishman has taught you? I am too well assured of the attachment of my children of the Sault and of the Lake to apprehend their following your advice.”<sup>1</sup>

Vaudreuil's words of encouragement were badly needed just then, for his Caughnawaga children had failed a second time in their attachment and loyalty during the expedition against Fort Le Beuf,<sup>2</sup> four months before he made his fatherly speech to them. They were, however, trying to atone for their waywardness. In a letter to his brother, an official in France, the Jesuit Coquart wrote: “The Iroquois of Sault St. Louis, ashamed of themselves for having abandoned M. de Léry in the attack on Fort Le Beuf, have been on a foray in English territory, where they encountered a detachment and killed all the soldiers. The only prisoners they took were a major and a lieutenant who were going to Fort George with three large packets, from which we learned the plans of the English as well as their strength.”<sup>3</sup>

The Caughnawaga Indians seemed intent on regaining their lost prestige and of basking once more in the smiles of the French governor. They were back in Montreal in December to congratulate the Marquis de Vaudreuil on assuming the office once held by his distinguished father, “whose love for his native children none of their nations

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 448.

2. Now Waterford, Erie Co., Penn. Winsor: *Hist. of America*, Vol. V, p. 492.

3. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 530.

could forget." Softened by their winning words, the new governor laid the blame on the common enemy for their departure from the path of righteousness. As a good father he scolded them. "I should speak to you of your backsliding," he declared. "You know that I have followed your trail and that I am aware of all you have done; but I check myself lest I might say too much on that subject. Those who are guilty should acknowledge their fault and seriously reflect that their own interests should urge them to observe better behaviour in the future. Let those who have strayed from their attachment to the French recall the wiles to which the English have had recourse to estrange you from me." <sup>1</sup>

General de Montcalm, who had succeeded Dieskau, was less enthusiastic, but looked at least

1. It is worth while comparing this mild speech with one made by Sir William Johnson, through his interpreter Montour, to a band of Shawnees and Delawares at Fort Johnson in the same year (1756). The Superintendent General of Indian Affairs could wield a sharp tongue when the occasion required it. "You are, I am persuaded, sensible that this perfidious Behaviour of SOME of your people is to the highest degree reproachful and unjustifiable, I shall not therefore add any more particulars to the General Facts I have just now mentioned, and I am inclining and willing to believe that those of your people who have been guilty of this scandalous Breach of Faith and thereby violated the Covenant Chain of Peace and Friendship so often and so solemnly renewed between our Forefathers and yours, must have had their judgments confounded, their Principals perverted, and their hearts poisoned by the vile and Treacherous Delusions of the French, who are enemies to the happiness of all who come near them, and, like the Devil, practise every wicked method to debauch all who will listen to them, from the Ties of honor and truth and justice. They have imposed upon your Bretheren, and seduced them from the right Path and led them astray from their true Interest. As I am well acquainted with the infamous character and conduct of this restless Bloodthirsty Nation, the French I say, to their iniquitous influence I impute the falling off of the deceived part of your people from their duty to the great King of England and their engagements with their ancient Bretheren the English." *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 154. One wonders how the interpreter Montour was able to convey all this vituperation to the intellects of the poor untutored Indians.

for their neutrality. "There is no reason to hope," he wrote, "that those nations will take up the tomahawk against the English, although many of their young men may follow us to war. This is all we can reasonably expect from a people who are almost entirely among the English." This general's successful expedition on Lake Ontario, in 1756, was the occasion of a change of heart among the allies and gave them a chance to regain their lost reputation. At Oswego, the Indians, among whom were over a hundred Caughnawaga warriors, helped to strike terror into the English soldiers who, fresh from Europe and unaccustomed to Indian methods of warfare, hastened the surrender of the fort.

Hoping for similar results in the expedition of 1757, the French officials took the precaution, early in the year, of seeking the good will of the Indian allies in the colony. In February, M. de Rigaud paid a visit to Becancourt and to Saint Francis, to chant war-songs for the purpose of exciting the enthusiasm of the Abenakis. M. de Longueuil went on a similar mission to Caughnawaga and to the Lake of Two Mountains. In his *Journal*, Montcalm reveals his anxiety regarding these visits, and trusts that it will not be a case of mountains labouring to bring forth mice.<sup>1</sup> To assure Indian co-operation in the campaign of 1757, he himself went to the Lake of Two Mountains, and having aroused the fighting ardour of the Algonquins and the Nipissings of that mission,

1. *Journal*, p. 153.



he resolved to pay a similar visit to Caughnawaga. Accordingly, on July 9, accompanied by De Bougainville and other officers, he crossed over Lake St. Louis. With De Neuville,<sup>1</sup> the Jesuit missionary, at their head, the warriors were awaiting him at the water's edge, and they saluted him with a volley of musketry.

Montcalm condoled with the Indians on the loss of their chiefs who had died during the previous winter, and brought a wampum belt in reply to the one which had been presented to him by the village when he arrived in Canada. The ceremonies usual on such occasions were faithfully and boisterously observed. After the feasting and conferences, in which he received their pledge of active co-operation in the struggle of the coming months, the Indians gave an exhibition of their war-dances, moving their arms and legs in rhythmic cadence, meanwhile keeping time to warlike airs, in which the words, *Let us crush the English under foot*, were skilfully harmonized. De Bougainville<sup>2</sup> had the honour during this visit of being

1. Jean-Baptiste de Neuville was born at Hesdin in 1722; he entered the Order at the age of twenty-one, and taught in the college of Quebec from 1746 to 1751. He went back to France for his theology and ordination to the priesthood. On his return to Canada, he was stationed at Caughnawaga from 1755 to 1760. He died at Montreal, January 15, 1761.

1. Louis Antoine de Bougainville was born at Paris in 1729. He served with distinction under Montcalm during the war in America. After his return to France he took part in the German campaign of 1761. He then entered the French naval service and accomplished the first French circumnavigation of world (1766-1769), which he described in a volume entitled *Voyage autour du monde*. He commanded French warships during the American Revolution. In 1779 he was appointed squadron commander, and in 1780 named field marshal in the army. Napoleon honored him with a senatorship, created him count of the Empire and gratified him with a membership of the Legion of Honour. De Bougainville died in 1811.

adopted into the Caughnawaga tribe as a member of the Turtle clan, receiving the Indian name of *Karonhiatsikowa*—immense sky.

Two days later, Montcalm returned to Montreal, and immediately proceeded in the direction of Lake Champlain for the purpose of carrying out plans for a summer campaign. In addition to the regular regiments, eighteen hundred Indians accompanied him, of whom eight hundred were Christian Indians drawn from the various villages; but Montcalm's *Journal* reveals the fact that he had much trouble in controlling the impulsive children of the forest. His victory over General Munro, at Fort William Henry, was dampened by the bloody massacre of the English prisoners after the capture of that fort. How many Indians from Caughnawaga, forgetting their Christian teaching and yielding to their hereditary instincts, became involved in that atrocious crime, it would be hard to say. At any rate, they had a share in it. The slaughter of the defenceless men at Fort William Henry had sharpened their thirst for blood, and when M. de Bellestre, two months later, was looking for recruits to help him raid the Palatinate, he crossed over from Lachine and harangued them. They decided to take up the tomahawk again, but not before they had regaled themselves. Their custom did not permit them to start on the war-path before they had indulged in a feast, "during which their old men would derive wisdom and their young men courage." <sup>1</sup>

1. *Relations et Journaux*, Quebec, 1895, p. 128.

After they had slept off their orgies, one hundred and thirty Caughnawaga warriors followed Bellestre in his sanguinary raid among the German colonists of Central New York. As a result, sixty homesteads were burned, crops and merchandise were destroyed, forty persons were slain, and one hundred and fifty men, women and children, made prisoners. With the exception of a few wounded, the raiders returned safe and sound to Montreal at the end of November. Vaudreuil gave Bellestre a hearty welcome and appeared "well satisfied with the success of the expedition." Montcalm's reflections were graver, for he wrote in his *Journal* that: "Such was the destruction of the unfortunate canton made up of German families who appeared to have decided to remain neutral. This loss may have some weight with the English should they decide to rebuild Oswego. However, it will encourage the Indians and Canadians; it will put fear into the English, and will help to keep them at loggerheads with the Five Nations."<sup>1</sup>

Two other raids against the English settlements were organized almost immediately. The first detachment, made up of eighty Indians and thirty soldiers, under the command of Langy de Montegron, which was to start on December 11, was delayed for fifteen days owing to an accident which befell Saragoa, the chief of the Caughnawagas. The second, under Sieurs de Richerville and de la Durantaye, with two hundred Indians, "almost

1. *Journal*, p. 321.

all the Iroquois of Sault St. Louis,"<sup>1</sup> set out in the direction of Albany and Saratoga. They joined de Montegron at Carillon on Lake Champlain, and at Mount Pelée came in contact with a detachment of English, which they defeated. They brought back one hundred and forty scalps and seven prisoners, the rest having fled to the woods and perished. Five warriors from Caughnawaga were killed in the skirmish, a circumstance grave enough to bring Vaudreuil over to the village with five wampum belts of condolence and the promise of five *panis*, or slaves, to replace those that were slain.

The Caughnawaga warriors were in close touch with the governor-general and were keeping him informed of their efforts at peace-making. They had sent a belt to their Mohawk brethren urging them to neutrality, and the favourable answer which they received was a good omen. They prevailed upon de Vaudreuil to send delegates to a great council which was to be held at Onondaga to offset the manœuvring of Sir William Johnson in the cantons. Little attentions were considered necessary by the high officials to keep the Indians in good humour during those exciting times. The Marquis de Montcalm, in a letter to Bourlamaque, March 3, 1758, wrote that De Bougainville, "who has more money than he knows what to do with," went over to see his friends at Caughnawaga, taking with him one hundred and fifty pounds of tobacco and ten pounds of vermilion paint.

1. *Journal*, pp. 326, 333-334.



Bougainville had a warm spot in his heart for Caughnawaga and was evidently a frequent visitor there. The Comte de Maures de Malartic, one of Montcalm's officers, belonging to the Béarn regiment, on his way down to Montreal after the victory at Oswego in August, 1756, tells us that he crossed over in his canoe from Pointe Claire to Caughnawaga, early one morning, and found M. de Bougainville there, enjoying the company of Father de Neuville, the missionary, and of the officer in charge of the garrison. "I went over to ask a competent guide from the commandant, whom I found at breakfast with the Jesuit. They promised to give me the smartest Indian in the village if I would help them to get rid of a pie—*attaquer un palé*—an invitation I did not refuse. After breakfast they made me visit the church and a few of the cabins, which I found very becoming. I took leave of them at ten o'clock, skimmed over the rapids and reached Montreal at noon." <sup>1</sup>

Bougainville's commander-in-chief, with his experiences at Oswego and at Fort William Henry still fresh in his memory, entertained somewhat different sentiments towards the Indians. Montcalm was not always as civil or respectful with them—even the Christian Indians—as perhaps circumstances required. They failed him at Carillon in 1758, and seemed mortified at not having had a share in that famous victory. The day after the battle they came to congratulate Montcalm,

1. *Journal des Compagnes au Canada, 1755-1760*. Dijon, 1890.

but the French general showed his impatience and told them to "go to the devil, if they were not satisfied." "I do not need you now, to kill the English," he retorted. "If you have come to look at dead bodies, go behind the fort and you will see some." In reporting their interview to Vaudreuil the Indians remarked, "We did not need an interpreter to understand his words."<sup>1</sup> The French governor wrote immediately to Montcalm to say that "the colony owed its safety to the Indians," and that these people looked for more kindness from the commander-in-chief. They complained in their councils of his rudeness to them and had resolved not to take part in any other war as long as he was in command.

It was Ganiengoton, chief of the Caughnawaga warriors, who found fault with the French general's lack of politeness; and yet Montcalm, in noting the incident in his *Journal*, gave credit to the Indians for their warlike valour during the season of 1758. He blamed the interpreters for spreading rumours against him, and remarked that it was with the Indians and their interpreters as it had been, in olden times, with the oracles, who were made to say whatever pleased those who paid or flattered them.<sup>2</sup> Montcalm saw the hidden hand of Vaudreuil in the complaints of the Indians, and he sent De Bougainville to the governor to try to put an end to the discord which

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. X, p. 805-806.

2. *Journal de Montcalm*, Quebec, 1895, p. 429.

would eventually affect the service.<sup>1</sup> He was convinced that Vaudreuil had been influenced by the ideas of subalterns, although the governor's own ideas, in Montcalm's opinion, were never of very much value.

Events began to follow each other rapidly. Chevalier de Lévis had received orders to proceed with three thousand men, including the Indians, in the direction of Schenectady to force the Five Nations either to remain neutral or to take up arms for the French, but the arrival of Abercromby's legions over Lake George obliged Vaudreuil to recall de Lévis to Carillon, when the warriors of Caughnawaga and Lake of Two Mountains started in alone to take issue with General Bradstreet in the neighbourhood of Lake Ontario. In 1759, "when the salvation of the colony depended on the rapidity with which the French could reach Quebec," Montcalm instructed de Rigaud to assemble all the Indians of Caughnawaga to keep communications open between St. John and La-prairie. This was probably the last service they

1. Montcalm wrote to De Massiac: "A letter from the Marquis de Vaudreuil, a copy whereof I transmit you, leads me to believe that he will endeavour, perhaps, to send you a piece of mischief which issued from the interior of the colony by means of some domiciliated Indians of the Sault St. Louis. I write you on the subject, in order that you may not give yourself the least uneasiness nor feel on any account of the pain an ill-concocted intrigue may afford me. To the Marquis de Vaudreuil's letter I annex my answer:—the same spirit that regulates my conduct toward the governor-general, has dictated my answer—the spirit of conciliation necessary to the good of the service, and from which I shall never depart, no matter what privation I may receive. You can, my Lord, assure His Majesty of this. I exhort, unceasingly, the Marquis de Vaudreuil to stifle in silence and in the interior of his cabinet these discretions, of which the public must not be aware, and M. Bigot, whose office obliges him to notice them, and whom I request to devise some mode of conciliation, gives me reason to hope that he will succeed."

were called upon to render to the French before the curtain fell for the last time.

The downfall of the French deprived the Caughnawaga Indians of a Government which had been kind and paternal to them during the ninety years they had lived under its protection. All had been done that could be done, during that long period, to advance their spiritual and temporal interests. After having provided their ancestors with a means of acquiring a knowledge of the true God, the French led them from their ancient haunts along the Mohawk to lands near Montreal, where watchful eyes could superintend and direct their gradual development towards a usefulness of which they had not yet dreamed. It was the French who had delivered them from barbarism and had given them the first taste of true civilization, and, in return, the French might reasonably have expected gratitude, if not substantial assistance, as the storm clouds gathered and the darkness of defeat began to close in upon them. But gratitude had never been a prominent virtue of the tribe, and it is one of the ironies of history that when General Amherst was on his way down the St. Lawrence in September, 1760, to begin the siege of Montreal which preceded the final wrenching of Canada from France, the Iroquois of Caughnawaga offered their services to pilot him safely through the Lachine rapids to his destination.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Relations et Journaux*, Quebec, 1895, p. 257.



## CHAPTER VIII

### Under British Rule

1760-1820

*Trouble in the West—Distrust of the Iroquois—A Famous Lawsuit and Decision of General Gage. Sir William Johnson—The Klingancourt Incident. The Indians and the American Revolution—End of the Jesuit Regime at Caughnawaga—The Eleazar Williams Episode—The Indians in the War of 1812—The Fur Companies—The Argonauts of Caughnawaga—Pioneers of the Faith among the Rocky Mountain Indians.*

THE events of the next two years, which were so radically to affect the destinies of the French and English on this continent, do not appear to have disturbed the Indian population, for as far as we know, there is no document extant to show that the Caughnawaga warriors regretted the change of flags. Loyal to the French Crown, when it suited them, and sincere in the practices of the religion which the French missionaries had taught them, their constant intercourse with the English traders at Albany and the uninterrupted traffic in furs which they carried on there for years, notwithstanding repeated edicts and prohibitions, made them feel that their temporal interests had long been better served by the English than by



LOUIS-ANTOINE DE BOUGAINVILLE



the French. When, therefore, they realized that the barriers between New York and Canada had been broken down, the call of their fellow-tribesmen along the Mohawk grew louder in their ears, for it was strengthened by the voice of Sir William Johnson, who had acquired an ascendancy over them probably unequalled by any of the French governors. The Six Nations were at last one people under the same government, and the great tribune called out to them to pool their interests.

Some Western tribes, however, chiefly those frequenting the posts of Detroit and Michillimackinac, were giving signs of trouble and unrest; they were far from being placated, although occasional outbursts of hatred against the English did not denote any greater love for the French. Colonel Bradstreet credited the trouble in the West to the insinuations of the French traders still living and labouring out there, who were persuading the tribes that the English desired their entire extermination. "The tribes of Indians surrounding the Great Lakes," he wrote, "still love the French, who keep it up from the Mississippi and the Illinois by extending trade to all the nations they can, and sending emissaries to propagate such tales as turn most to their advantage and prejudice to the English." There were other reasons for the troubles of the English with the Western tribes. "The colonist traders generally despised the Indians and treated them as of commercial value only, as gatherers of pelts, and held their lives in little more esteem than the lives of the animals that



yielded the pelts . . . . The Indians were often cheated out of their furs; in some instances they were slain and their packs stolen." <sup>1</sup>

The contempt which the English displayed for the Indians, and their refusal to destroy the Western forts when the war was ended, also explain the hostile attitude in that hinterland. "The Indians contrasted the sympathetic and bountiful paternalism of the French *régime* with the neglect and niggardliness which characterized the British rule." <sup>2</sup> They were, besides, taking umbrage at the growing power and aggressive methods of the new masters in the West, and made them pay a heavy price. They massacred Lieutenant Gordon and a small garrison at Venango, <sup>3</sup> where they were received as friends. At Fort Presqu'île, <sup>4</sup> they persuaded Ensign Christie and twenty-four men to capitulate, and then treacherously murdered the greater number of them. At Michillimackinac, by a clever ruse, they entered the fort, killed and scalped a score of English soldiers, and would undoubtedly have continued their sanguinary work had not the Jesuit Pierre du Jaunay given the alarm all the way to Detroit.

In a few months the Indians killed or captured no less than two thousand of the British king's subjects; they drove several thousand to distress and beggary, besides burning to the ground nine

1. MARQUIS: *The War Chief of the Ottawas*, p. 3.

2. *Handbook of the Indians of Canada*, p. 418.

3. Near Franklin, Penn.

4. Now within the town of Erie.—WINSOR: *Hist. of America*, Vol. V, p. 492.

block-houses, killing soldiers and traders, and carrying off a hundred thousand pounds of goods, including large quantities of gun-powder. If they were able to do all this in one short summer, what might be expected if there were a general uprising? Pontiac, the powerful chief of the Ottawas, had failed in his conspiracy at Detroit, but his success in the succeeding weeks gave his followers new courage.

The English authorities were fully aware of the danger in the West, and for this reason made special efforts to cultivate the good will of the Christian Indians in Canada. In 1763, Sir William Johnson sent Captain Claus to hold a congress at Caughnawaga "of all the nations of Canada."<sup>1</sup> He urged them to despatch messengers to the Western tribes, still devoted to the French, to notify them that they were now subjects of the British Crown, and that they should bury the hatchet for all time. The congress was made up of Indians from La Presentation, Three Rivers, St. Francis, and Lorette, and envoys were appointed, some to go up the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario in the direction of Detroit, others up the Ottawa route to Michillimackinac. They carried belts of wampum to notify their Western brethren that, after seven years of warfare, a universal peace had been proclaimed among the Christian powers in Europe, and consequently among the whites of America. By this peace Louis XV ceded to England his claim and right to all his

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 542.

dominions on this continent as far as the river Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> "We must now regard the King of England as our common father," was the substance of Johnson's message; "the French and English are now subjects of the same king; the Western tribes must immediately bury the hatchet and not disturb the peace of the Confederacy."

The Iroquois were not included in the embassy. Those Indians had long memories; they were friends of Johnson and ready to serve him, but they were far from being reconciled with the Western tribes, and the great white chieftain feared that their presence among the envoys might do more harm than good; they might foment trouble in places where he was endeavouring to pave the way for peace. We may gather this from a remark of his to Sir Jeffrey Amherst that "the Indians had made known to him their readiness to engage in war against their brethren in the West and were only waiting the call to fall in with the troops." Johnson was very naturally unwilling to check so much good will; he might need those Indians later. Accordingly, occasions were sought to pay them in advance for future services; one had already been found at the expense of the Jesuit missionaries, so far as their brethren at Caughnawaga were concerned.

Father de Neuville died in 1761, and was succeeded by Father Joseph Huguët, a Belgian, who was to remain as superior at Caughnawaga until his death in May, 1783, a period of twenty-one

1. *Docs. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 544.

years.<sup>1</sup> Bernard Well, also a Belgian, held a similar office at the residence in Montreal, having arrived there in 1759. Being in closer touch with officialdom, he was also charged with the temporal administration of the seigniories of Laprairie and Sault St. Louis. There had never been any dispute regarding the title of the Jesuits to the Laprairie property which, as we have seen in a previous chapter, had been given to them outright, in 1647, by *Sieur de Lauzon*; nor regarding the ownership of the seigniorship of Sault St. Louis which, since the visit of *Lafitau* to France in 1718, had been reaffirmed to the Jesuits conjointly with the Indians. But the ill-defined boundaries which separated the two seigniories involved the title to a strip of land extending the entire depth of the seigniorship of Laprairie. Nothing, in fact, could be more indefinite than the terms in which the limits of both seigniories had been set forth in the original records. In the deed of 1647 the western limit of Laprairie extended "to a quarter of a league beyond a prairie called *la Magdelaine*, opposite the islands which are near the rapid of the island of Montreal," while in the deed of 1680 the eastern limit of the seigniorship of Sault St. Louis began at a point "opposite to the St. Louis rapid, with the two islets and shoals which are in front."

1. Father Joseph Huguët was born in Belgium in 1725, and entered the Jesuit Order at Tournai in 1744. After his profession he taught classics in the colleges of Namur and Cambrai from 1745 to 1752, when he began his preparation for the priesthood. After four years of theology at Douay he was ordained and quitted Belgium for Canada. He spent a couple of years at Quebec, probably teaching at the college there, and was sent to *Cahoonawaga* in 1759, where he spent the rest of his life.



According to such data, the [properties overlapped each other to a depth of thirty-seven acres and a few perches, and became the occasion of a famous lawsuit between the Indians and the Jesuits which was pleaded in Montreal in 1762, before Governor Gage and the Military Council. <sup>1</sup>

The wording of the original deed of concession of 1647, namely, that the seigniority of Laprairie should extend about—*environ*—two leagues along the river front, was the foundation upon which the Indians based their claim. <sup>2</sup> They contended that every inch of land extending beyond the two leagues should form part of their seigniority. On the other hand, since the intervention of Lafitau before the Regent's Council in 1718, the Jesuits claimed that all doubt as to the ownership of the strip had been cleared away, and that it had been recognized as part of their Laprairie property by the same royal authority which, in 1668, secured to them <sup>3</sup> all that had been previously given to them by Sieur de Lauzon. Their claim had undoubtedly been upheld during the last

1. General Gage's Military Council was composed of Frederick Haldimand, Col. 4th Batt., Royal Americans; William Browning, Major, 46th Regt; Herbert Munster, Major, 4th Batt. Royal Americans; and Gabriel Christie, Major and Quartermaster of His Majesty's armies. Daniel Claus was attorney for the Indians, while Bernard Well defended the interests of his Order.

2. Seventy years later, in 1830, Sir James Kempt wrote to Sir George Murray, the Colonial Secretary; "The argument that the riverfront of Laprairie should be restricted to two leagues, and that the surplus adjoining Sault St. Louis belongs in consequence to that seigniority, cannot be entertained, for in the grants of both seigniories the limits of their fronts are qualified by the expression *en environs*, an expression by no means uncommon in old French grants which are frequently couched in very loose and ill-defined terms." (Canad. archives.)

3. *Arrêts et Ordonnances Royales*, Québec 1854, Vol. I, p. 105.

forty years of the French *régime* by the governors and intendants, who ratified certain grants which the Jesuits, as seigniors of Laprairie, had at various times allotted out of the land in litigation.

Two instances—enough to prove their ownership—were cited in the official papers. In 1720, they had disposed of one hundred and eighty acres to Catherine Cusson, the wife of Jacques Thiberge, a transaction which was ratified by Intendant Hocquart in 1732; and in 1733, they had made a grant of one hundred and twenty acres to Louis Gagnier *dit* Bellavance.<sup>1</sup> Both of these transactions were registered in Quebec, something which would hardly have been allowed if their title to the land had not been recognized. Again, with the authorization of the French Government, and at considerable expense, the Jesuits had erected two saw-mills at different periods upon the same land, they had spent much labour and money in building a stone grist-mill, with wharf and mill-race, near the old site of Kahnawakon, and it is not probable that they would have utilized land held by a doubtful title, especially as there were other sites on the Laprairie seigniory suitable for mills. Furthermore, they had organized a small parish at the upper end of the property, and had built a church, dedicated to St. Peter, for the benefit of neighbours and of tenants who had begun to settle on the land.

The favourable interpretation put upon these transactions by the highest officials in the French

1. Canadian Archives: Corresp. C. 268.

colony left the Jesuits persuaded that their rights could not be questioned even after the Conquest of 1760, and in disposing to colonists of lands which they claimed were theirs by so many titles,<sup>1</sup> they saw no reason for changing the line of conduct which they had followed during the previous forty years. Their confidence, however, was soon to receive a rude shock. On January 3, 1762, Father Bernard Well, acting as procurator of the seigniory of Laprairie, conceded a portion of the thirty-seven acre strip to Pierre Lefebvre, a young French farmer, who, like other beneficiaries, would pay a small rental, and thereby help the Jesuits to meet the expenses they were continually incurring in their various works. This seemed a minor matter to them, but it soon became serious enough. Little was needed in the years immediately following the Conquest to excite the suspicions and the prejudices of the new political masters of Canada. The Jesuits were the owners of large estates; any pretext was sufficient to create trouble for them, and in the Lefebvre transaction, Father Well had unwittingly provided the authorities with one. At the request of the Indians of Caughnawaga the validity of the grant made to the young farmer was challenged before General Gage's Military Council in Montreal.

The plea of the Indians was the existence of

1. La seigneurie de Sillery avait été concédée aux Jésuites surtout pour les sauvages, mais le nombre de ceux-ci avait beaucoup diminué, et les Pères Jésuites concédèrent un certain nombre de terres qui leur avaient été réservées entre la Pointe-à-Pineau et la Pointe St-Joseph. (*Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. XXV, p. 323.)

an ancient parchment which conferred on them the ownership of the disputed strip of land, a parchment which a chief of the village was said to have possessed once upon a time, but which the Jesuits "had extorted from his wife under a religious pretence, against which she was unable to defend herself." The accusation was false, and Father Well, when called by General Gage's Military Court to defend himself, did not have much difficulty in pulverizing the legend. The Jesuits had neither seen nor heard of any document relating to the seigniorship of Sault St. Louis except the one issued, in 1680, by Frontenac and Duchesneau; if any other had ever existed, the original should be found among the official records which were carefully preserved in Quebec or in Paris. It had been sought in vain by "interested" parties and — to use Well's own words — "it is not probable that the English administration will be any more successful in the search." However, a pretext, no matter how slender or nebulous, was sufficient to act upon, and the present one was all that was needed for the moment. The clause in the de Lauzon deed of 1647, which asserted that the seigniorship of Laprairie should extend to a spot "opposite the islands which are near the rapid of the Island of Montreal" was ignored by Gage and his Council, who decided that the seigniorship itself should be restricted to exactly two leagues along the river front.

As a consequence, the strip of land in dispute was detached from Laprairie and added to the



seigniori of Sault St. Louis, while the grant made by Well to Lefebvre was declared null and void. Nay more, ignoring all that the Jesuits had done for the Indians at Caughnawaga, ignoring the civilizing influence they had exercised over them for eighty years, the first English governor of Montreal, on March 22, 1762, committed even a graver injustice, for besides reducing their La-prairie seigniori to the extent of twelve or thirteen thousand acres, to meet the wishes of the Indians, he refused to recognize the deeds of concession issued by Frontenac and Duchesneau in 1680. Not only that, but he deprived the Jesuits of all the rights and privileges they had held for eighty-two years in the seigniori of Sault St. Louis and invested them in the Indians then living there and in others "who would like to join them" later.<sup>1</sup> In other words, Indians who were yet to come, strangers yet unborn, might claim a legacy which had been the fruit of the toil and worry of a body of men who had borne the brunt of things for over three-quarters of a century. And yet, the original deeds of 1680 did not assert that Louis XIV had given the seigniori to the Indians, but that he had given it to the Jesuits to enable them to support the Indians—which was not the same thing. General Gage judged otherwise, and after his decision all that remained to the missionaries in the old village, which they had founded, was the use of

1. In 1762 the reserve was withdrawn from the management of the Jesuit Order and the fee simple was retained by the Crown for the benefit of the Indians.—Duncan C. Scott in *Canada and Its Provinces*, Vol. IV, p. 717.

a residence to live in, and a church wherein they might exercise their religious functions.

This success with the British governor was very gratifying to the Indians of Caughnawaga; they had won their suit; they had gained a victory over their missionaries; but they found out when it was too late that they had made a false step. They had always been hunters rather than farmers, and, as far as can be learned, the revenue derived from the seigniorship of Sault St. Louis had never been sufficient to meet the expenses of administration; there is, in fact, no record of any revenue ever having been derived from the seigniorship except what probably came in from the few *censitaires* whom the Jesuits had permitted to locate on it after the Lafitau settlement in 1718.

"Although granted for different purposes," wrote a Government agent, Primrose, sixty-eight years later, "it is to be remarked that, previous to the Conquest, both seigniorships were in the possession of the Jesuits. From what fund the expenses of building, maintaining and serving the churches were defrayed does not appear, nor whether any revenue was derived by the Jesuits from Sault St. Louis, wherewith they could defray these and the other expenses of the mission. It would seem that the Jesuits, having the administration of both seigniorships, necessarily defrayed the expenses of both; but possessing Laprairie by one title and for their own use, they could never be considered as bound, after the separation which was made in the year 1762, to defray any expenses incurred in

respect to Sault St. Louis.”<sup>1</sup> When the annual stipend allotted to the missionaries by the French Crown ceased, as it did after the Conquest, the Jesuits continued to meet their own expenses out of the revenue derived from the seigniority of La-prairie; but the decision of General Gage, which took the title and the administration of the other seigniority out of their hands, practically closed one of the only sources of help they had for the sick and the indigent of the mission.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the satisfaction which the Indians experienced over their victory was of short duration. The ownership of the seigniority of Sault St. Louis remained confirmed in their favour, but its eastern boundary line was changed again. In September of the same year, 1762, owing to “circumstances relative to the patent which the Jesuits claimed from Louis XIV,”<sup>3</sup> General Gage reconsidered his decision regarding the limits of the two seigniories and ordered the surveyor Péladeau to replace the posts on the boundary line where they had originally stood—*où les anciennes avait été plantées*.<sup>4</sup> A closer investigation had shown him, according to the testimony of Sir William Johnson, that this land had been given by the King of France to the

1. Canadian Archives: Ind. Corresp. C. 269.

2. Lord Howick wrote from Downing Street during the discussion on the Caughnawaga Indian claims in 1833: “It was deemed to be by no means established that the Jesuits contributed to the subsistence of the Iroquois of Sault St. Louis, subsequently to their being deprived of the management of that seigniority, in a greater degree than their charity might have disposed them to contribute towards the relief of any indigent persons professing the Roman Catholic faith.” (*Caughnawaga Archives*.)

3. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 550.

4. *Colonial Office Records*. Ser. Q., Vol. 139, p. 79.

Jesuits solely<sup>1</sup> and he handed back to them the strip which, six months previously, he had adjudged did not belong to them. This new decision aroused the bitter resentment of the Caughnawaga Indians, which, as we shall see, was not soon to die out.

It would seem that their resentment was shared by a neighbouring proprietor, René Cartier, seignior of LaSalle, who perceived in the governor's new order an encroachment upon his rights. At his request, in December, 1763, Brigadier-General Burton, the successor of General Gage, directed that the boundary lines of the upper ends of Sault St. Louis and of Laprairie should be examined again by two sworn surveyors, one to be named by Cartier, the other by the Jesuits.

In the event of disagreement, the two surveyors were to select a third whose decision should be final. In 1765, Cartier appointed the surveyor Raymond to perform this service, while the choice of the Jesuits fell upon Jean Péladeau. A disagreement having arisen, a third surveyor named Guyet was called in. When Péladeau learned that Guyet favoured the views of Raymond, he refused to have further dealings with them, and the two proceeded to establish boundaries which curtailed the width of the upper end of the Laprairie seignior to two leagues. The Jesuit owners demurred at this restriction, and in February, 1766, they took their case to the Court of Common Pleas in Montreal. Judgment was given against them, but in

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 550.



August, 1768, they appealed to the Superior Court in Quebec. There the judgment of the lower tribunal was reversed. The plea of René Cartier was rejected and the Jesuits were restored to the possession of their strip of land.

After all this litigation, of which they had been the first instigators, the Caughnawaga Indians found themselves in a worse situation than ever. Except their title to the seigniority of Sault St. Louis, which had been definitely granted to them, they had lost whatever they had won, and, what was more serious for them, they no longer had the Jesuits to help them in the administration of their affairs. Henceforth, as wards of the King of England, they had to deal not with men who had always treated them with fatherly care, but with agents of a Government who would undoubtedly mete out full justice to them, but a justice untempered by the charity they had so long experienced at the hands of their missionaries.

Their futile efforts to have Gage's judgment reversed, for the purpose of regaining the strip of land which they claimed was theirs, constituted a grievance which the Indians living in 1763 transmitted to their descendants, and for seventy years, notwithstanding the decisions of departmental officials and law courts, every Canadian governor on assuming office was reminded by formal delegations from Caughnawaga that they had been victims of an injustice perpetrated by their former missionaries and continued by successive Colonial Governments. Records still extant show that a

great deal of time and labour was spent in trying to convince them that their grievance was an imaginary one. They clamoured for their rights, and even in the nineteenth century, as we shall see later on, they sent envoys across the Atlantic on two different occasions to interview the King of England.

The order issued by General Gage to restore the disputed strip of land to the Laprairie seigniory fully confirmed the Jesuits in the tradition which they had held since the visit of Lafitau to the Court of France in 1718; they had always contended that the limits between the two seigniories had been definitely fixed in that year, that the old stone mill which they had built remained within the boundaries of Laprairie, and that the several thousand acres of cleared land, which they had always claimed as belonging to their Laprairie property, greatly enhanced its value. It may seem unwarranted to attribute less worthy motives to the doing of a generous human act, but in the light of after events, the suspicion is justified that it was not pure love for the old French Jesuits, but rather the predatory tendencies of the new masters of the colony, which urged the first English governor of Montreal to restore the disputed strip of land so readily.

The persecution which the Order was undergoing in Europe in those years and its banishment from France in 1762, made a deep impression upon the higher British officials in America, especially upon Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian

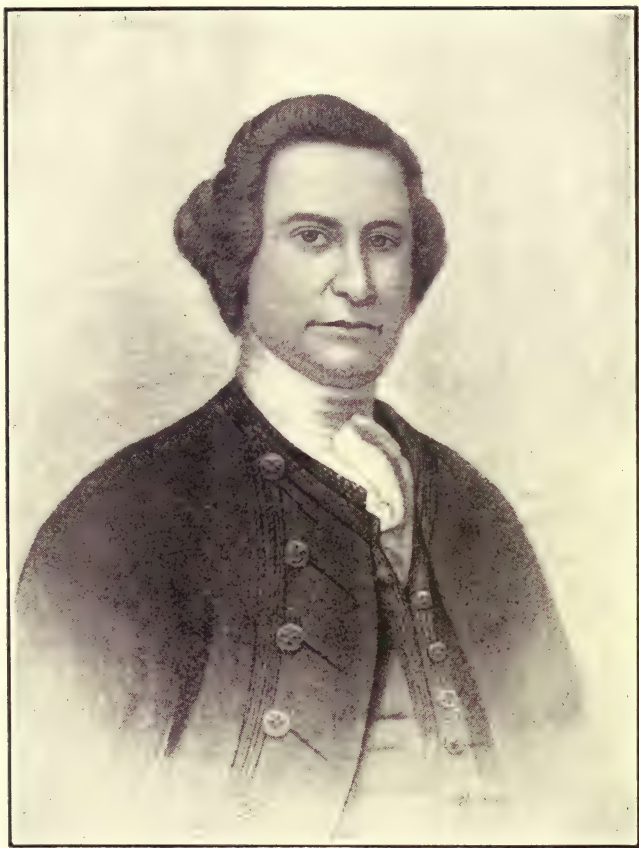
Affairs, who was inclined to believe that the Jesuit estates in Canada could be easily alienated. Accordingly, after a deputation from Caughnawaga had gone to him to protest against the second decision of General Gage, he wrote as follows to Sir Jeffrey Amherst, in September, 1763: "The Indians request that I may lay their demand before His Majesty, and I am of opinion that their affair may be made very easy for them, now that the Society is broke in France."<sup>1</sup>

As the thirty-fourth article of the Capitulation terms prevented the seizure of private property, Johnson promised himself the pleasure of laying the matter before the authorities in England. Evidently the Superintendent of Indian Affairs had his eyes on the seigniori of Laprairie as well, for in 1763, in his address to the deputation of Caughnawaga Indians, he said: "I am heartily sorry to find a set of people<sup>2</sup> who pretended solely the care of your salvation should thirst after worldly possessions. You find that on your application concerning the former tract in dispute, the Governor of Montreal gave you immediate redress, which you would have met with in this also but that the case is different, as these lands<sup>3</sup> were given by the King of France to the Jesuits solely. But I shall lay the matter before the persons in power, who will certainly give you all the justice which your case shall appear to deserve." Johnson's

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 550.

2. The Jesuit Missionaries.

3. Evidently Laprairie and the strip claimed by the Indians.



SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON

*From a portrait in the State Library at Albany, N. Y.*





plan at bottom was to abolish the Catholic missions—"those fountains of discord"—and replace the Jesuits by Anglican ministers. "The lands would revert to the Crown by the abolition of the missions," he wrote, "and would endow a bishopric in Canada, as well as provide for a number of lower clergy who might be employed greatly to the advantage of His Majesty's interests." <sup>1</sup>

Johnson, however, was not very sanguine as to the ultimate success of his plan. He was frank enough to admit that the French missionaries had greatly outstripped the English in making converts among the native population. The Jesuits lived with the Indians in their villages and took care to form them by word and example. "I fear," he wrote to the Lords of Trade, "that we shall be unable to find such persons among our own clergy." <sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the superintendent's unfavourable opinion of the Jesuits and of their influence among the Indians, he did not seem to think much more of the ministers of his own religion or of their practical work in the same field. "Many of our present missions," he wrote, "are established at settlements on the seaside, where the nations formerly residing are now extinct or reduced by a considerable number, whilst other missionaries live in our towns, so that three or four visits a year are all that the Indians get; and the missionaries, unable to speak their language, are obliged to

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, p. 600.

2. *Ibid.* Vol. X, p. 580.

have recourse to very poor interpreters. There have been other of our missionaries who have too often used their influence in obtaining grants of land, and this gives the Indians the most unfavourable opinion of their worldly and interested views. The Mohawks told me lately that they apprehend the reason they had no clergy as formerly amongst them was because they had no more land to spare.”<sup>1</sup> As a preliminary effort, he recommended the sending of ministers to reside among the Oneidas, Mohawks, and Senecas, as these nations were religiously inclined, and revealed a desire to study the Christian religion by the assiduous use of the prayer book which he had had printed for them in their own language.

Father Huguet continued to work alone among the Caughnawaga Indians; but living now under an unsympathetic Government, and having to deal with officials professing an alien faith, he knew not what the future held out for him. The news which reached him spasmodically of the persecution of his Order in France was in his judgment a prelude of worse things to come. He felt that once the sources of recruiting were dried up in the motherland, the supply of missionaries would cease as far as Canada was concerned, and the work his brethren had been doing for a hundred and fifty years would come to an end, unless other means were found to fill the gaps left by the gradual disappearance of the old men yet in harness in the various missions. But Huguet was still in the

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VII, pp. 579-580

prime of life, being not yet forty years of age, and he gave his time and his labour as unsparingly as his predecessors had done to the Indians at Caughnawaga.

This labour had been somewhat lightened during de Neuville's term of office by the departure of members of the tribe for the West. Their previous expeditions in hunting and in war had made them acquainted with that country, and now that the quarrels between England and France had ended, and all were enjoying the benefits of a single government, their relations with the Western tribes were gradually becoming more peaceful. After the treaty of 1763, many Iroquois from Caughnawaga settled in the valley of the Ohio, in the neighbourhood of Sandusky and Scioto, and at the outbreak of the American Revolution this small colony of emigrants numbered about two hundred.<sup>1</sup> The treaty with Pontiac in 1765, and the Stanwix treaty of peace, arranged at Johnson Hall, in 1768, between the English colonists, the Western tribes and the Confederacy, put an end to the anxieties of the British, at least in those quarters, and the warriors of all the tribes who had taken such a prominent part in the conflicts of recent years were summoned to return to their homes and lay down their arms in peace.

An incident took place in July, 1770, which proved that, although living now under a new *régime*, the Indians of Caughnawaga continued to be deeply attached to the religion which had been

1. *Handbook of Indians of Canada*, Ottawa, 1913, p. 82.



taught them by the French. A delegation from the village went to meet Sir William Johnson, at German Flats, to communicate to him what to them was a serious grievance. They reminded the superintendent of his visit to them at the time of the capitulation of Montreal, ten years before, and of the promise then given by General Amherst that, if they abstained from assisting the French in war, they would enjoy their rights and possessions and the free exercise of their religion.<sup>1</sup> The Indians accepted these assurances, and had during the past ten years behaved in such a manner as to show their fidelity and attachment to the English.

All these remarks were preliminary to a serious complaint they had to make against a renegade Frenchman named Matthew Klingancourt, or Clin-court, who had bought a house at Caughnawaga, and who no sooner went to live there than he began to disturb the peace of the village. This interloper abused Father Huguet; he carried false tales to the officer in charge of the fort, and complained of the methods the missionary took to keep his dusky flock in order. The Indians resented the intervention of this self-appointed sympathizer. They defended their priest, whom they described as a "peaceable, good man, who endeavours as far as is in his power to restrain disorders in the usual manner and to punish offenders according to the religious forms of our Church; but he is threatened and treated with the utmost contempt, so that he

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 237-238.

cannot do his duty through the artifices of this Frenchman. This gives us great concern, and if the abuse is not stopped we may in a little while be deprived of our religion, the use of which, we are assured, shall be permitted to us. We, therefore, earnestly request that you will take the matter into serious consideration and, if you think it fitting, lay it before the king, that we may not be interrupted hereafter in the exercise of our religion, or our priests prevented from inflicting such pains and penances on offenders as our Church requires." Sir William Johnson promised to settle matters to their satisfaction. "As I understand the governor has sailed for England," he added, "the readiest way to gratify your desire will be by a letter to the Frenchman. I shall accordingly write to him in a proper manner, and give Colonel Claus instructions about this affair on his return to Canada, which will be in a few days."<sup>1</sup>

Evidently Klingancourt's stay at Caughnawaga was not of long duration after this unpleasant episode. We find traces of him, in 1780, bringing in two prisoners and one scalp from the Mohawk river to Oswegatchie.<sup>2</sup> In 1783, when he held some post of responsibility at Fort Niagara, General Haldimand complained of his negligence, his continual drunkenness and the disorderly manner in which he carried on his work there, and Haldimand resolved to dismiss him from the king's service

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VIII, p. 238.

2. *Canadian Archives: Haldimand Coll.*, B. 120, p. 100.

as soon as the evidence of his misconduct should officially be brought before him.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile events in the English Provinces were moving rapidly. The Boston Tea Party was only three years off, but the pot had been long aboiling. Writing to the King of Poland, an exile in France in 1757, eighteen years before the first shot was fired at Lexington, Chevalier de Lévis referred to the expedition against Louisbourg in the following words: "This expedition has cost England much in men and money, and does a great deal of harm to their colonies, which are tired of war and unwilling to support the taxes that are imposed. This is causing a fermentation among the people. For a long time all the colonies have not been satisfied with the parliament of Old England; they would prefer to be independent."

There was discord in the air and it was a much debated question in military and governmental circles, if trouble came to a head, in which camp the Indian tribes would be found. They would be precious allies on either side, and the one that should succeed in gaining them over would be exempt from the nervousness that followed having them as enemies. English soldiers in particular were never very keen on meeting them in war. "One cannot conceive the fear the Indians inspire in that nation," wrote Bigot to the Minister of Marine, twenty years previously; "it has no strength to defend itself against them, and this terror is

1. Canadian Archives: Haldimand Coll., B. 120, p. 113.

well-founded on account of the cruelties they are capable of.”<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the American Revolution there was a great deal of indecision among the tribes themselves as to what side they should take. Fifteen years of peace had strengthened the Iroquois Confederacy; it had assumed its ascendancy over the neighbouring tribes, and it would require subtle diplomacy to make any of them take part in a war in which they had no direct interest. The canton Iroquois looked upon the debates which were going on and upon the combats which were to follow as an expiation of the evils inflicted upon them in the past.

The whites were about to wage war among themselves, and the old Indian sachems thus reasoned out things in their own Indian fashion: “White men are now fighting over the land they robbed us of; why take sides with them in their quarrels? When we red men went to war, no white men came to help us. They let our tribes destroy each other, and when our lands were soaked with our blood they came and occupied them. Let the white men alone; let them destroy each other; when they are gone, the forests and mountains and lakes and rivers, which belonged to our forefathers, will return to us.”

The Indians who were living among the American colonists were familiar with the complaints which

1. Bigot to the Minister: “On ne peut comprendre la peur que les sauvages inspirent à cette nation; elle n’a pas la force de se défendre contre eux, et cette terreur est assez fondée vu les cruautés qu’elle essuye de leur part.” *Canad. Archives, Coll. Mery*, Vol. XIII, p. 95.



had been launched against England, but they wanted to be more fully informed, and they hesitated before they came to a decision. The Delawares and the Senecas refused to listen to any suggestion from the British Tory emissaries about taking up the hatchet in their favour. At a meeting of the Indians held at Pittsburg, at which a deputation of Senecas was present, White Eyes, a sensible and spirited chief, came out boldly with the statement that he would not fight against people born on the same soil as himself. The Americans were his friends and brothers, and no nation should dictate either to him or to his nation as to the course he should pursue.<sup>1</sup>

This independent spirit will explain the attitude of a number of Caughnawaga Indians at the beginning of the great crisis. They had no interests at stake either in the Tory or in the Yankee cause; they cared little under which flag they had to live. What reason had they to prefer one side to the other? "Taxation without Representation," the basic motive of the struggle which was being begun, had no meaning for them. If they had any leaning at all it was towards the American rebels, not because those people were suffering injustice at the hands of a mother country beyond the sea, but rather because, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, the call of blood was strong in the Indian heart. Since the Deerfield and other raids and the influx of adopted white prisoners earlier in the century, a great deal of New England blood

1. W. L. STONE: *Life of Brant*, Vol. I, p. 112, New York, 1838.

flowed in the veins of the warriors living at Caughnawaga. Besides, the success of the Continental troops in the early weeks of the campaign made a deep impression upon them. Montgomery's siege of St. John, which was to last forty-five days, and the proximity of that fort alarmed them lest a similar fate might be awaiting their village.<sup>1</sup>

In August, 1775, acting on their own initiative, a band of Caughnawaga Indians sent a deputation to General Washington, who was stationed at Cambridge, announcing their willingness to aid the rebels in the event of an expedition into Canada. This decision was actually carried out,<sup>2</sup> for in an intercepted letter sent by Sir Guy Carleton to General Gage, the Canadian governor informed him that many of the Indians had gone over to the Americans. "Had the Indians remained firm," he continued, "I had hopes of holding out for this year, though I seem abandoned by all the world. However, I cannot blame these poor people for providing for their own security, as they see multitudes of the enemy at hand and no help from any quarter, though it is now four months since their operations against us first began."<sup>3</sup>

Five weeks after the capitulation of Montreal, December 22, 1775, General Wooster, commandant

1. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. VIII, p. 661.

2. Quatre sauvages du Sault St. Louis sont arrivés en cette ville (Montréal) qui disent avoir des lettres du Gen'l Washington qu'ils portent au Gen'l Thomas, qui est encore à Deschambault, pour lui faire apprendre qu'il y a un renforcement prodigieux de Bastonnais à la Pointe, et de se retrancher à Sorel, en attendant qu'ils arrivent."—VERREAU: *Journal de J.-Bte Badaeux*, p. 210.

3. W. L. STONE: *Life of Brant*, Vol. I, p. 117, New York, 1838.

of the town, perceiving that there was little hope of Montgomery's success in capturing Quebec, sent a message to the Indians of Caughnawaga, requesting them to preserve neutrality which had been already promised and purchased; they were not to bar the way against the Continental troops if the latter decided to return home. The Indians promised to remain neutral and to carry out the conditions demanded by the American General.<sup>1</sup> Other and subtler influences were also at work trying to alienate them from the Tory cause. Sieur La Corne St-Luc, one of the few remaining officers of the old *régime*, had taken the precaution to meet the chiefs of Caughnawaga for the purpose of recalling the gifts of crucifixes and watches which the last French governor had given them as emblems of lasting friendship, and also of reminding them of Vaudreuil's parting words, urging French and Indians throughout Canada to live in amity and not to abandon each other's interests. Now was the time to give these sentiments some practical expression, and La Corne sent ten or twelve warriors to St. John with a wampum belt, conveying a message to General Montgomery that the Indians had buried the hatchet and would not take it up again against the Bastonnais.

The fear that this friendship for the rebels would spread among other tribes urged the Tories to act quickly. Accordingly, in 1775 a large number of chiefs and warriors, under the leadership of Guy Johnson, were invited to meet Sir Guy Carleton

1. VERREAU: *Invasion du Canada*, p. 72.

and General Haldimand in Montreal. It had been stated that Carleton, on the plea of humanity, was opposed to the employment of Indians in the army, but this was denied later by Joseph Brant, the famous Indian chieftain who accompanied Johnson and the delegates, and who has told us elsewhere that on their arrival in Montreal Carleton proposed that they should enter the service. In a speech delivered in 1803, he said:

“We were living at the residence of Guy Johnson when the news came to us that the war had begun between the king’s people and the Americans. We took little notice of the first report, but in a few days we learned that five hundred Americans were coming to seize our superintendent. We at once reflected upon the covenant of our forefathers as allies of the king and said, ‘It will not do for us to break it, let what will become of us!’ Long before that, Governor Carleton said to us: ‘I exhort you to continue your adherence to the king and not to break the solemn agreement made by your forefathers; for your welfare is intimately connected with your continuing as the allies of His Majesty.’ He also said a great deal more to the same purport; and on this our minds were more firmly fixed, for we acknowledged that it would certainly be the best in the end for our families and ourselves to remain under the king’s protection. A council was then convened at Montreal, at which the Caughnawagas were present as well as ourselves of the Six Nations. On this occasion General Haldimand told us what had befallen the



king's subjects and said that now is the time to help the king. 'The war has begun; assist the king now, and you will find it to your advantage. Go now, and fight for your possessions, and whatever you lose of your property during the war, the king will make up to you when peace returns.' This was the substance of Haldimand's speech. The Caughnawaga Indians then joined themselves to us. We immediately commenced in good earnest and did our utmost during the war."<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that this speech, which the famous Joseph Brant made a quarter of a century after the war was over, slightly exaggerated the facts. The Caughnawaga Indians did not all respond to Haldimand's invitation. Chevalier de Lorimier, whose family had great influence in the village, was apparently not aware how deeply the neutral spirit had penetrated it. In a memoir<sup>2</sup> giving an account of his services during the campaign, he tells us that he was persuaded that the Caughnawaga warriors would do their duty in the face of the common enemy, but when he started to look for recruits among them they refused to enlist; no one would follow him but Charles Couque—*Tekouakoan*—"a rascal who had already been hunted from the village," and who later offered to betray him.<sup>3</sup>

A second appeal made by him, accompanied by the war-songs and martial speeches of a certain

1. W. L. STONE: *Life of Brant*, Vol. I, pp. 89-90.

2. VERREAU: *Invasion du Canada*, p. 246.

3. Ibid. p. 277.

Thaiaiake, was a little more successful. A few warriors, led by Sotsiehouoane, who was nicknamed *The Grenadier*, joined the ranks of Carleton's forces in 1775. It was only in the following year that better sentiments prevailed. A daring feat of arms performed at Isle-aux-Noix, in Lake Champlain, by the loyal Caughnawaga element, who captured an American boat and slaughtered the crew, brought the village back into the good graces of Carleton, who sent de Lorimier to pardon the rest for their lack of loyalty. The Indians of St. Regis and those of the Lake of Two Mountains were not so easily reconciled, however, and Carleton had some trouble in making them overlook the backsliding of the "nation of the Sault whom they decided to look upon as enemies of the king."<sup>1</sup> In assuming this attitude they were perhaps too severe on their brethren of Caughnawaga; for these had been taken off their guard by the false reports of other Indians. They had been led astray by the tribe whom Montcalm had once called the "faithful Oneidas".

While the other Five Nations remained staunch supporters of King George's cause, nothing is more evident than that the Oneidas, still recalling their ancient allegiance to Ononthio, held out against the British and tried to pervert the Caughnawaga Indians.<sup>2</sup> Oneida runners were continually on the

1. VERREAU: *Invasion du Canada*, p. 286.

2. The Oneidas would seem to have always been friends of the French. Even in 1697, Frontenac relied on their fidelity, while he entertained quite different sentiments for the rest of the Iroquois. *Docts. Colon. Hist. N. Y.*, Vol. IX, p. 680.

trail to and from the American camps. They usually made Caughnawaga their headquarters in Canada, and while there urged the warriors "not to aid the king's troops or give the smallest help to the government against the rebels"; they warned them that if they or any other Indians persisted in doing so, "the Yankees would come and destroy themselves and their villages from the face of the earth." On one occasion, in order to enforce their messages, they reported that there were on the march up the Mohawk river thirty thousand Continental troops who were determined to destroy the Five Nations and all the Indians known to be fighting for the King of England. That the Oneidas succeeded only too well in their propaganda among the dusky descendants of the New England prisoners is well known.<sup>1</sup> The agent, Dan Claus, writing in 1778, informed the military authorities that Caughnawaga Indians had taken refuge among the rebel Oneidas and had started to undermine the loyalty of the other nations "with a parcel of falsehoods," as for instance, that all the Canadians and domesticated Indians were won over to rebel interests, that the St. Lawrence river was blockaded by a French fleet, and that Canada must inevitably surrender.<sup>2</sup>

1. The Caughnawaga archives have the reprint of a letter published by a descendant of the Rice family, one of whose members was captured in Marlboro, Mass., in 1703, and brought to Caughnawaga. In this document we read that "Governor Adams reports that Captain John Brown was sent to Canada to urge the French and English to fight against King George . . . The Canadian Six-Nation Indians, whose chiefs were captured in childhood, in Massachusetts, would aid their brethren in New England."

2. Canadian Archives: Haldimand. Coll. B. 114.

General Haldimand saw the risk incurred if such reports were allowed to spread among the Indian nations living in the New York province, and in the spring of 1779, he chose "eight of the best and most capable Iroquois of Caughnawaga" to visit the Oneidas for the purpose of urging them to fight for the king; but the embassy does not seem to have had much success. An expedition of two hundred and seventy warriors sent out from Caughnawaga, Two Mountains and St. Regis in September of the same year, to help the other nations, proved also to be a tame affair, all because of an interview they had with a Caughnawaga chief who had turned rebel after a visit to the Oneidas. It was to his unwholesome influence that Colonel Campbell, <sup>1</sup> commander of the district, attributed the lack of enthusiasm shown by many of the warriors. This officer remarked that the Caughnawaga element, "nearly a hundred of them, seem more disposed to hunt beaver than to go to war."

One of the most famous spies of the period was the Oneida, Oratoskon. "He skulked about the village of Caughnawaga," wrote Campbell to Haldimand, "until he had no doubt circulated all the poison he was charged with, and debauched two foolish young men to return with him."<sup>2</sup> With these and three others who had deserted the country three years previously, and in company with thirty

1. In 1775, John Campbell succeeded Sir John Johnson as Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

2. Canadian Archives: Haldimand Coll., B. 112.



Oneidas, he was to go from Albany to interview General Washington, and then he was to return to Canada and report everything which he found favourable to the French and the rebels.

Unrest existed at Caughnawaga during the American Revolution, but all the warriors were not affected. While some of them were proving disloyal to the British cause, the majority remained true. Colonel Campbell was not unfavourably disposed towards the Indians in the village, and he acknowledged that he was employing Caughnawaga chiefs, "faithful and trusty Indans," to carry messages to the Five Nations. He was willing to concede that something should be done to crush out the traitors who made their homes there, and even suggested the sending their families to join them and then burning down their houses.

Another source of anxiety for the military authorities in Canada, during the eventful days of the Revolution, was the presence of a French force on the American side, and the arrival in the Indian villages of a proclamation issued by Count Rochambeau, urging the Canadian Indians not to fight against the allies of their great father, the King of France. Naturally, from the rebel point of view, it was important to convince the various tribes that an alliance had been effected between the American colonies and the French nation, and General Schuyler, then stationed at Albany, judged that the best way to do this was to send an Indian deputation to the French headquarters on Rhode Island. It was hoped that when the



CHURCH AT CAUGHNAWAGA



envoys witnessed the strength of the French forces they would be profoundly impressed and would carry this impression home to their countrymen.

Five Iroquois from Caughnawaga formed part of the delegation which arrived at Newport in August, 1780. They were royally received by the French commander, entertainments and military shows were prepared for them, and they expressed much satisfaction at what they saw and heard. When they started for home a proclamation written in French and English was delivered to them, copies of which they were to distribute among the friendly Indians. This document was signed by Count Rochambeau and read as follows:

"The King of France, your father, has not forgotten his children. As a token of remembrance I have presented gifts to your deputies in his name, He has learned with concern that many nations, deceived by the English who were his enemies, had attacked and lifted the hatchet against his good and faithful allies, the United States. He has desired me to tell you that he is a firm and faithful friend to all the friends in America and a decided enemy to all its foes. He hopes that all his children whom he loves sincerely will take part with their father in the war against the English."<sup>1</sup>

The appearance of this proclamation was disconcerting to the English, and, although it mattered little in the end, it was asked how such a rebel

1. W. L. STONE: *Life of Brant*, Vol. I, p. 104.



document could be smuggled into the Indian villages without the connivance or at least the knowledge of the local chiefs or of the French missionaries whose influence over their flocks was still great. An incident showing a disposition to suspect the Jesuits of intercourse with the French allies of the Americans, occurred at the village of St. Francis, where Father Charles Germain was residing.<sup>1</sup> Some Indians had, on the authority of Germain, they asserted, spread the report that American rebels were about to cross the border in large numbers, and that in a few days the face of things in Canada would be changed. Thereupon the commandant of the small garrison at St. Francis, Lieutenant Crofts, accused the Jesuit of communicating with the enemy.

"As I had some suspicion of the truth of what I charged him with," wrote Crofts to Captain Foy, secretary to Haldimand, "and as I conceived I might be able to form a truer judgment from any sudden emotion or agitation of his features than from his answers, I never suffered my eyes to stray from him, and really thought I discovered that kind of disorder in his countenance, an embarrassment in his speech which indicated guilt of not being concerned at least with knowing what had passed. If what he is accused of be true, I

1. Charles Germain, born in 1707, was a native of Luxemburg. He arrived in Canada in 1739 and the following year was sent to the Abenakis mission at St. Francis. In 1752 he was proposed as Superior General of the Canadian missions, but Governor de Vaudreuil asked that owing to the difficult times the colony was passing through, he should be left among the Abenakis. Germain spent the rest of his life at St. Francis. He died there on August 5, 1779.

cannot help expressing my surprise at it, as he is a man that I have made use of sometimes to procure me intelligence. But one thing is to be considered of him—he is a Jesuit, and like them, may be playing a deep game.”<sup>1</sup>

General Haldimand took the trouble to answer this letter himself, and while commending the diligence which this military mind-reader displayed in obtaining information regarding the rebels, gave him a delicate lesson. “I cannot conceive,” wrote the governor, “that a man of Germain’s character and good sense could be instrumental in propagating such incredible reports, or in concealing from the knowledge of the government anything that could affect the service.” When Germain was again suspected on the same grounds by Luke Schmid, captain of the Yamaska militia, Haldimand wrote to him in March, 1779, ordering him not to bother the missionary again, “as he is convinced that he is speaking the truth, and confidence must be placed in him.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, Haldimand invited his officious subordinates to sift their sources before arriving at conclusions, for as the governor went on to say, “the Indians who informed on Father Germain may have invented the story for the sake of the reward.” The old Jesuit at St.

1. Canadian Archives: Haldimand Coll. B. 117.

2. General Haldimand showed the same kindly feeling for Father Anthony Gordan, missionary at St. Regis, and the same confidence in his loyalty. When he received the news of his death in 1779, he wrote: “We have lost in him a faithful and useful subject. To prevent as much as possible the advantages that may be taken of this event at the village where he presided, I would have Mr. Johnson return immediately to it, taking with him one of the Department to act as interpreter or useful person.” *Haldimand Collection*. B. 11

Francis had no need of justifying his conduct, but he seized the opportunity to put matters in their proper light. "You may tell His Excellency," he wrote, March 16, 1779, "that I will act as I have acted up to this, and he may be assured that it will be as much out of gratitude for his esteem as it is my duty that I shall apply to all regarding the service. If anything comes to my knowledge worthy of note I shall make it known to the officer of the village or to yourself to transmit the knowledge to His Excellency."<sup>1</sup>

Father Joseph Huguët, the missionary at Caughnawaga, was an interested witness of the exciting events of the long campaign which ended in American independence. As spiritual leader of his turbulent flock, his duty was to instruct them in their obligations to legitimate authority, but the equivocal rôle they played during the first months of the campaign showed that they had listened to him with closed ears and had given him considerable anxiety. Their refusal to take up arms against Montgomery and his invading army, and later developments in the Rochambeau propaganda at Caughnawaga, laid him open to the charge of inculcating, if not a spirit of disloyalty, at least a spirit of neutrality which the Indians of the village seemed only too willing to observe.

For a time he was an object of suspicion. Charges had actually been laid against him, as we learn from a couple of letters sent in the summer of

1. Canadian Archives: Haldimand Collection, B. 117, p. 70.

1776 to Bishop Briand by M. Montgolfier, vicar-general in Montreal, wherein the writer hints that the missionary at Caughnawaga was one of those who either favoured the American rebels, or who were probably not as enthusiastic over the Tories as they might have been.<sup>1</sup> These rumours bore fruit, for Huguet was actually removed from his mission. Montgolfier informs us that Father Gordan, when about to start as chaplain with the warriors, in June, 1777, in the direction of Fort St. John, thus leaving the Indians at home without spiritual aid, requested General Carleton to allow Huguet to return. Montgolfier made a similar request, and the governor's answer was that the affair could be arranged, but that he should first have to see the Bishop. The missionary was back in Caughnawaga shortly afterwards.

What foundation was there for these suspicions of Huguet's disloyalty? Evidently nothing more serious than what was alleged against his fellow-Jesuit, Father Germain, of St. Francis; evidently nothing stronger than the charge brought against the other Jesuit, René Floquet, of Montreal, who was admonished by Bishop Briand and his vicar-general for having admitted to the rites of the Church "three habitants who had openly borne arms in the service of Congress and had done sentinel duty at the gates."<sup>2</sup>

Public sentiment and over-wrought nerves will explain many an incident in those months. The

1. Archives Episc.: Quebec. Fol. 98, p. 62.

2. Ibid.



recent European war has shown the world what unwelcome guests alien prisoners are, and how acts of Christian charity done to them are easily misinterpreted. After the defeat of the Americans at the Cedars, on the Upper St. Lawrence in May, 1776, three hundred and seventy prisoners of war were held at Caughnawaga, while awaiting their exchange for the Loyalists who had been taken at the capture of St. John. Possibly the presence in the village of so many American aliens may have left Huguet's attitude toward those transient strangers liable to be misundertsood.

The old missionary survived the invasion of Canada seven years. Infirmities of various kinds had begun to undermine his health, and fearing that an unexpected call to the other world might come to him some day, he wished to be prepared for the emergency. In a letter written to M. Montgolfier, on Christmas Day, 1780, he enclosed a note which read as follows: "I beg Father Well to come and hear my last confession." Happily his condition was not so bad as he imagined, for he lived nearly two and a half years longer. He died at Caughnawaga, in May, 1783, and was buried beneath the church he had served for twenty-two years. Father Bernard Well would seem so have taken his place for a few months, as his name is found on the registers; but before the end of the year he had returned to Montreal.<sup>1</sup>

1. Bernard Well, a Belgian, was born in 1724, entered the Jesuit Order, in 1744, arrived in Canada in 1757, and died at Montreal, in March 1791.

Well was the last of the line of Jesuits who for a hundred and twenty-six years had guided the spiritual destinies of the Christians of Caughnawaga, that is, since the foundation of the Iroquois mission at Laprairie in 1667. The persecution his Order had undergone in Europe for several years, and its suppression throughout the world in 1773, had practically closed the thrilling chapters of its history in this country. As the eighteenth century drew to a close, only a few of the older members were left to superintend the missions in Lower Canada and in the West. Worn out by age and labours, they disappeared one by one, carrying with them to the grave the unpleasant memories of chicanery and petty-fogging on the part of both the Government and the Indians, of which they had been the victims in the closing years of the century. Father Casot was the last survivor, and yet we find this Jesuit, single-handed and at the age of seventy, engaged in a legal struggle for the rights of the Order to which he had belonged.

The Caughnawaga Indians still held to the misty tradition of the lost document which, they asserted, entitled them to the strip of land which had been surreptitiously taken from them in 1762. Although, in 1769, Sir Guy Carleton had ordered the deputy surveyor-general, John Collins, to fix the boundaries of Laprairie and Sault St. Louis seigniories, and had left the Jesuits in peaceful possession of their property, the Indians claimed that the governor had promised them that the land would be given back to them as soon as the

last Jesuit had disappeared.<sup>1</sup> They awaited this event with stoic resignation, knowing that it could not be far off. Meanwhile, to assure themselves against a possible disappointment and the ultimate loss of the eastern strip, thirty-seven acres wide, they took the precaution to seize a similar width on the western end, thereby coming in conflict with the Grey Nuns of Montreal who, as the heirs of Mademoiselle de la Noue, had the control of the seigniory of Chateauguay.<sup>2</sup>

The Grey Nuns and the Indians reached an understanding in 1773, but the worries of the Jesuit had not yet ended. In 1797, General Christie, the owner of the de Léry seigniory, sued Father Casot for a portion of the strip of land, which he asserted should belong to him. The case came before the Court of Common Pleas in Montreal and was dismissed. But the end of litigation had not yet come. In 1798, notwithstanding the possession which his predecessors had enjoyed for a century and a half, Casot had again to defend his rights, when the Crown, by order of General Robert Prescott, administrator, sued the Jesuit, on behalf of the Caughnawaga Indians, for the

1. Regarding a supposed promise of Sir Guy Carleton (now Lord Dorchester) the Caughnawaga Indians were always under a false impression. The governor's message to Sir John Johnson on August 29th, 1794, was an order to make a fresh inquiry into their right to the land which they claimed. "Upon the principle," he told the Indian deputies, "that the king does not take the land of one description of his children to give to another, I cannot now give an answer to what you ask concerning the Jesuits' lands. I must first enquire to whom the right belongs." (*Caugh. Arch.*)

2. For interesting details regarding the claim of John Mackay (grandson of M. de Ligneris, who was part possessor of the seigniory of Chateauguay after 1702) and his long petition to Sir John Coape Sherbrooke, in 1817, Cf. *Canad. Archives: State Records, Lower Canada, 1792-1841.*

now notorious strip of land. Casot lost his case before the Court of King's Bench, but in the following year, 1799, he appealed from this judgment, and the same court, "after having heard the parties, by their lawyers in the case, examined anew the procedure and, after having deliberated, reversed the decision of the previous year, leaving the Jesuit again in the possession of his land." This was Casot's final act, undertaken for the vindication of the rights of his Order. When he died at Quebec, a few months later, the Government inherited not merely the estates of the Jesuits, but also the resentment of the Indians who called upon Carleton's successors to redeem the promise they claimed he had made to them.

With the death of Huguët, in 1783, and the retirement of Well, the mission of Caughnawaga entered at once under the immediate jurisdiction of the Bishop of Quebec, who experienced considerable embarrassment at his inability to provide the village with a permanent missionary. The registers for 1783-1784 give the names of the Rev. J. B. Dumouchel, pastor of Chateauguay, and the Rev. P. Gallet, of Lachine, both next-door neighbours, who evidently responded to merely passing calls in the exercise of their ministry. Bishop Briand wrote to the Indians in 1784, to sympathize with them at the loss of Father Huguët, and to deplore the fact that he was unable to send them anyone sufficiently conversant with their tongue. "No more Jesuits," he wrote, "no one from the seminary of Montreal, who have trouble in sup-



plying the needs of their own mission at Lake of Two Mountains. Our Canadian priests in these times do not apply themselves to the study of the Indian tongues as did their elders. Happily I have found one, not a European, but a Canadian, a compatriot brought up among you, familiar with your customs, and able to lead you in the right direction. If at first he does not know the language well enough to meet all your needs, you must have patience. The scarcity of priests should urge you to take good care of him and support him.”<sup>1</sup>

This successor of Father Huguet was the Rev. Laurent Ducharme, a young man whose letters show that from the beginning he realized that Caughnawaga was not a bed of roses. The Jesuits had never looked to the Indians for support, and from the outset Ducharme found himself in extreme poverty. Colonel Campbell, acting in Haldimand's name, had promised him a pension, and to further the same object the bishop wrote to the governor that the missionaries among the Indians did more for the interests of the king than they did for religion; for, except for the graver crimes which they prevented in the villages, they did not reap the spiritual fruit from their instruction and labour that they could in fully organized parishes. The promised salary never came. Ducharme, nevertheless, persevered in his heroic zeal, and, after nine years of toil and abnegation, died and was buried at Caughnawaga.

1. Caughnawaga Archives, *passim*.

His successor, the Rev. Antoine Rinfret, arrived in troublous times. A marked moral deterioration had taken place in the village. Constant communication with white men, as well as over-indulgence in firewater, had excited a spirit of insubordination among a number of the tribe, who refused to listen to the wise counsels of their missionary. So deeply were they affected that the attention of the Church authorities was attracted, and Bishop Denaut had to intervene.

In his letter from Longueuil to the Indians of Caughnawaga, in September, 1802, the prelate told them that lack of religion and sound morality was the cause of their present dangerous state, for they no longer resembled their forefathers, who were fervent Christians. Their forefathers avoided evil counsellors, but they listened to false teachers who wished to rob them of the faith. Their forefathers feared firewater, looking upon it as Indian poison, but they would soon see their village a desert if they continued the immoderate use of it. Their forefathers cherished the missionaries as fathers, but they ill-treated theirs. Their forefathers prayed, listened to instructions and observed the duties of their religion, but they neglected the things of heaven, sought only the things of earth, and lived in idleness. Their forefathers were submissive to their pastors and strove to make their children act likewise, but they thought little of insulting their pastor, and were backward in chastising their children. The bishop concluded his frank letter with some sound advice and urged

them to adopt another line of conduct towards the missionaries who would take charge of their spiritual welfare.

Rinfret was sent to Mascouche, in 1802, and was succeeded by Antoine Van Felson, who was transferred to Beauport in 1808. Rinfret returned to Caughnawaga a second time, and remained six years. He died at Lachine in 1814. Rev. P. N. Leduc succeeded the deceased pastor for a short while, and the same year Rev. Nicolas Dufresne received the appointment. Five years later, when he was transferred to St. Regis, he yielded up his place to the Rev. Joseph Marcoux, a distinguished missionary, who held it until 1855, a period of thirty-six years, and, as we shall see, played an important part in the history of the village.

It was during Rinfret's first term of office that a child was brought to live in Caughnawaga, around whom centred a great deal of legendary lore for many years. Strange coincidences tended to make the world believe that he was the son of Louis XVI, the missing heir of the French Bourbons, who was said to have been saved from the hands of the Revolutionists and brought to America. Towards the end of the year 1795, a family named De Jardin, consisting of parents and two children, arrived in Albany, having in their possession a number of articles which belonged to Marie-Antoinette. Madame de Jardin, it was said, was a person of highly nervous temperament, who, when the Revolution was mentioned, would wildly sing the *Marseillaise* and then burst into tears. She ap-

peared to take extraordinary care of one of the children, a boy answering to the name of Louis, who was weak and idiotic.

After a few days' sojourn in Albany, the de Jardins disappeared. Shortly after, two Frenchmen arrived at Ticonderoga with the weak child, whom they handed over for adoption to Thomas Teorakwaneken, *alias* Williams, a Caughnawaga chief, who was wont to spend the hunting season in the neighborhood of Fort George. The child was henceforth known as Razar Williams. He also received the tribal name of Onwarenhiiaki, which means: *his forest is cut*.

Owing to the care which his foster-mother, Marie Anne Konwatewenteton, bestowed on him, young Razar gained physical strength, and at the same time a betterment was observed in his mental faculties. He played and amused himself with the other children of Caughnawaga, soon forgot the French he knew, and became familiar only with the Iroquois tongue. He grew rapidly, but was known still to be subject to hallucinations. It is stated that one day, when he happened to get a glimpse of the portrait of Simon, his gaoler, he drew back in horror, exclaiming that the face of that man was always before him. Tumours on his knees and elbows and scars under his eyes accorded perfectly with what was known of the young Bourbon prince, Louis XVII.

One day two French-speaking strangers met him in the village, and having examined his knees and elbows, disappeared, seemingly the prey of deep



emotion. Later on, an Albany merchant received a sum of money from France which was handed to Chief Williams, the foster-father of the youth, to pay for his education. In 1800, he was sent to a seminary at Long Meadow, in Massachusetts, directed by Nathaniel Ely, with a view to preparing him for the Anglican ministry. Razar Williams had now reached manhood, and having become a preacher and a teacher at St. Regis, was henceforth to be known as the Reverend Eleazar Williams.

Meanwhile rumours were bruited about, even in Europe, concerning this interesting personage. The Duchess of Angoulême is reported to have told one of her maids of honour that Louis XVII was living among the Indians in America, under the name of Eleazar Williams. The story grows in interest as it unfolds itself. In 1838, the Prince de Joinville, on his way home from Mexico, accomplished a secret mission in the United States, and immediately after his return to France, a French consul residing at Newport, Rhode Island, was asked to transmit information concerning a family formerly in the service of Marie-Antoinette, who had lived a short while in Albany about the year 1795.

Again we are informed that the Prince de Joinville returned to America in 1841, and notwithstanding all the mystery which surrounded his movements, he sought information about the Reverend Eleazar Williams, then living in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He even went thither and had

a long interview with him, possibly asking him, it was hinted, to abdicate his claims to the throne of France in favour of King Louis Philippe, then reigning. After that interview, Williams, we are told, sought seclusion, feeling that he was in danger of losing his life. Besides, the republican education he had received in the home of his adoption and his advanced age deprived him of all desire to rule over France.

These are the main facts of the story of Eleazar Williams gathered together by the Abbé Mainville, former missionary at St. Regis, the strange coincidences of which, he averred, should at least be made known. "If the story were true," exclaimed the too credulous missionary, "what reflections might be made on the vanity of human greatness!"<sup>1</sup> But details secured from other sources showed up the pretended heir of the Bourbons in a new light, and went to prove that Williams was an arrant impostor who had the secret of keeping his name before the public for many years. William Ward Wight, of Milwaukee, took the trouble to collect all the information he could about the Iroquois preacher of Green Bay, and found that, notwithstanding Eleazar's early idiocy and the hallucinations of his after life, he was an adept in exploiting the credulity of newspaper reporters and in playing upon the ignorance of the half-civilized classes with whom he lived. He spent the leisure moments of his last years in translating portions of the New Testament into the Iroquois language, and ended

1. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. III, p. 66-70.

his career in abject poverty. However, for several years before that event happened, Williams, as we shall see, was to play an active but compromising rôle in his relations with the Indians of St. Regis and Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup>

The war of 1812 between England and the United States, brought on indirectly by the ambitions of Napoleon, had its strident echoes even in Caughnawaga, and made that little village a centre of intense military activity for many months. The British blockade of the French coasts and Napoleon's retaliation against England on similar lines, touched the United States in a vital spot. Both blockades cut so deeply into its foreign trade that writers of history have kept wondering why the American Republic d'd not take up arms against France, as well as against England, which alone was to feel the weight of American resentment, with her Canadian colony as the nearest target. When war was declared in June, 1812, three armies were mobilized against Canada, the western army under Brigadier-General Hull, with headquarters at Detroit; the central army, with headquarters at Niagara, commanded by General Van Renssalaer; and the northern army, under General Dearborn, organized to operate against Canada by way of Lake Champlain.

The moment chosen would seem to have been a favourable one for the United States. There

1. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. III, p. 131. For further details about this interesting personage, cf. *The Lost Prince*; Facts tending to prove the Identity of Louis the Seventeenth and the Rev. Eleazar Williams, missionary among the Indians in North America. By John H. Hanson, 479 pp. G. P. Putnam & Co., New York, 1854.



*Souigny photo*

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH, CAUGHNAWAGA

*Showing the ancient altar*





were very few regular troops in Canada, every available British soldier having been kept in Europe to meet the legions of Napoleon, and during the first two years of this desultory struggle the colony was left to defend itself as best it could.<sup>1</sup> Sir George Prevost, Commander-in-chief of the Canadian forces, worked feverishly in enrolling the local militia in the various provinces, even calling out the Indians to defend their country. Recruiting was begun at once in the various villages, but during those first exciting days the Indians were not keen in offering their services, preferring, as their forbears did during the American Revolution, "to hunt beaver rather than go to war."

Some enthusiasm was expected from the Caughnawagas, who were the senior tribe in rank, but when these warriors were told that their services would be required on the Niagara frontier, they refused to listen to the recruiting officer. They expressed their willingness to fight in defence of the Lower Province, but they had no wish to go to the Upper Country. A disloyal spirit had been inculcated by the Reverend Eleazar Williams, the pseudo-Bourbon heir, who was employed in 1812 by the American Board of Missions for the purpose of ascertaining "what prospect there was of introducing Protestantism among the Indians of St. Regis and Caughnawaga."<sup>2</sup> At first, this clergy-

1. "The whole attention of the country (England) being directed to France, and the great resources of that nation sent to the seat of war in the Peninsula, she had little time to trouble or care about the hostilities on the other side of the Atlantic."—*The Historical Reason Why*. London, p. 277.

2. HANSON: *The Lost Prince*. New York, 1854, p. 217.

man "was troubled with conscientious scruples as to the morality of attempting to withdraw British Indians from allegiance to their Government," but after a conference with General Bloomfield he considered that "it would be proper and justifiable to try to bring them over to the American side," and accordingly he sent a confidential messenger to Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup>

Their refusal to enlist in the Canadian militia brought down on the Indians a severe rebuke from Sir George Prevost, who told them that they "were like old women, and that if they would not fight willingly where and when they were ordered to, they were not worthy to be called warriors, they should be considered unworthy of receiving provisions and presents from their Great Father's Government, and they and their commanding officers should be disbanded."<sup>2</sup> The occasion did not apparently arise to carry this drastic threat into execution, for we find the commander-in-chief, in December, 1812, approving the appointment of Captain de Lorimier of Caughnawaga to the staff division of the Indian warriors, who were sent to support the local militia in the neighbourhood of L'Acadie.

When the Northern army began to advance towards the Canadian frontier, preparations had already been made to offer a stout resistance. Caughnawaga was still practically an outpost as it had been in the French *régime*, the only dif-

1. HANSON: *The Lost Prince*, p. 227.

2. Canadian Archives: Ind. Corresp., C. 269.

ference being that in this struggle well-drilled American soldiers had taken the place of skulking pagan Iroquois. A general order issued from Montreal by General Baynes, dated October 8, 1813, shows how important the little village had become as a military centre. The order read as follows:

“Major-General Stovin to march with all the rest of the troops from Laprairie to Caughnawaga, leaving a guard for the protection of stores, etc.; Lieutenant-Colonel Williams to march with the flank company and cannon of the militia to Caughnawaga, leaving the Major with the battalion of L’Acadie. Lieutenant-Colonel Robertson, Canadian Regiment, to march with a detachment of the corps to Caughnawaga. The Caughnawaga Indians with all their officers to reinforce immediately Colonel Deschambault on the south side of the Beauharnois channel; Lieutenant-Colonel Boucherville’s battalion to march from Caughnawaga church to reinforce Colonel Deschambault’s battalion. The militia inhabiting the south shore of the St. Lawrence to repair to Caughnawaga, where they will receive further orders.”

The turmoil of war had come; and Sir George Prevost had begun to concentrate his forces. Cavalry, artillery and infantry were hurried across the river from Prevost’s headquarters at Dorval and held at Caughnawaga ready to advance against the enemy. They were quartered in the village: the dragoon horses, in Captain de Lorimier’s farmyard, and those attached to the artillery, in stables and barns in the neighbourhood.



The November weather was bleak and cold, and the troops, not having blankets, were obliged to sleep in hay-mows or burn the Indians' supply of winter firewood. When the claim for damages was put in, the interesting fact was brought to light that graft had begun to show itself in the neighbourhood. A report tells us that "a number of farmers employed by the commissariat, for the purpose of bringing in provisions and forage, had taken back hay for their horses after having informed the Indians that they were employed in the king's service. This induced the Indians to believe that they were to be supplied with whatever hay they chose to take." After an investigation, Sir George Prevost approved the payment of three hundred and fifty dollars to satisfy the claims of the Indians. <sup>1</sup>

In August, 1814, this same official gave his approval for the organization of another corps of Indian warriors consisting of companies to be selected in the villages of Caughnawaga, Oka, St. Regis, St. Francis, Becancourt and Three Rivers, and brought forward for service as circumstances would require. The Caughnawaga contingent was put under the command of Captain Lorimier Verneuil, and Lieutenants Gervase Macomber and Ignace Giasson, with Pierre Hubert as interpreter. Those officers were to "hold themselves in readiness at all times to move at the shortest possible notice and be responsible that their company shall be supplied with arms and

1. Canadian Archives: Ind. Corresp., C. 84.

ammunition and perfectly equipped in every respect for the service, so that His Excellency's expectations of the advantages to be derived from the arrangement may be fully realized."

Before the end of the struggle, the Caughnawaga Indians evidently reconsidered their decision not to fight outside of Lower Canada. With their fellow-warriors from St. Regis and detachments from the Western tribes, they were found under the command of de Lorimier and Ducharme opposing the Americans at Beaver Dams.<sup>1</sup> "All the thickets, woods, creeks and swamps," writes Wood, "were closely beset by a body of expert persistent Indians who gradually increased from two hundred and fifty to four hundred men." Although the British redcoats were there, "all in excellent touch with each other," Lieutenant Fitzgibbon, who commanded them, generously acknowledged that "not a shot was fired on our side by any but the Indians. They beat the American detachment into a state of terror, and the only share I claim is taking advantage of a favourable moment to offer protection from the tomahawk and the scalping knife."<sup>2</sup> Writing from Niagara, the last year of the war, Lieutenant-General Gordon Drummond mentioned the release which he effected from "unwarrantable confinement, of Indian warriors from Caughnawaga."

Other than these given, very few details are available concerning the part played by the Caugh-

1. *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*. Vol. XI, p. 341.

2. WOOD: *The War with the United States*. Toronto, 1918, p. 116.

nawaga warriors in the war of 1812-14, but the loyalty that made them don the king's uniform shows that the martial ardour of their doughty ancestors was still with them and only awaited an outlet. We get a glimpse of conditions after the war was over from a letter written from St. Regis, May 26, 1815, in which the loyal Indians of that village complained that their families were in great distress as a result of their long absence from home during military service, and they asked compensation from the government.

"Immediately after the declaration of war," they wrote, "we and our children opened our doors and parted from our families to join the king's army and assist in opposing the enemy, since which time our wives, as you are aware, have been exposed to the inclemencies of the weather on islands and strange places, while we and our warriors were engaged in the constant service of our Great Father. When peace was concluded we expected to return to the quiet of our homes and property, but found to our great mortification that those who had joined the enemy and those who had remained neutral were in possession of the village." Lieutenant Leclair, the village baker at St. Regis, who was one of the officers commanding at Beaver Dams, wrote from Charlottenburg to Lieutenant-Colonel McDonnell, declaring that, on all occasions throughout the war, the Indians under his command had behaved with great zeal and fidelity, and that he was convinced the statement of their

distressed situation was perfectly correct and expressed the hope that remedies would be applied.

The formation of the Northwest Fur Company at the end of the eighteenth century and its wide development during the first years of the nineteenth, opened up new avenues of activity for the Indians of Caughnawaga. Their love of adventure, their physical strength and power of endurance, their skill as hunters and trappers, their dexterity in handling the paddle, made them valuable aids in the thriving commerce which was then spreading over the continent. As a result their services were constantly in demand by the fur factors in their annual expeditions from Montreal to the Great Lakes and beyond. While the Northwest Fur Company was in operation, the greater number hired for the winter in the Upper Ottawa and Nipissing districts. Sometimes their engagements were of longer duration, lasting ten, fifteen or twenty years; sometimes they did not return at all. These long engagements became rarer after the amalgamation with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, but they were still prevalent for many years, and the long absences from Caughnawaga was the reason given in 1843 for the dwindling population of the village. Living in such close proximity to Lachine, the point of departure, these Indians were found among the crews of every flotilla of "north-boats" carrying merchandise to distant posts.

Between the years 1800 and 1820, the Caughnawagas had reached the Western prairies and



had even crossed the Rocky Mountains with the white traders, much to the discomfiture of the tribes living out there. David Harmon, an official of the Northwest Fur Company, wrote from Stuart's Lake, British Columbia, in October, 1817, "that, for several years past, Iroquois from Canada have been in the habit of coming into different parts of the Northwest country to hunt the beaver.<sup>1</sup> The natives of the country consider them intruders. As they are mere rovers they do not feel the same interest as those who permanently reside here in keeping the stock of animals good, and therefore they make great havoc among the game, destroying alike animals which are young and old. A number of Iroquois have passed several summers on this side of the mountains, which circumstance they know to be displeasing to the Indians here, who have often threatened to kill them if they persisted in destroying the animals of their land. These menaces were disregarded."<sup>2</sup> The murder, however, of an Iroquois with his wife and two children, by Carrier Indians of Stuart's Lake, discouraged further intrusion.

The Caughnawagas were apparently more welcome among the pagan Salish and Flatheads further south, where a few of them settled and whither they brought the religion and the religious ob-

1. As the fur traders pushed their way westward from the Great Lakes they were accompanied by Caughnawaga hunters. As early as 1820 a considerable number of this tribe was incorporated with the Salish, while others found their way about the same period down to the mouth of the Columbia river in Oregon, and north as far as Peace river in Alberta. *Handbook of Indians in Canada*. Page 82.

2. *Journal of Voyages and Travels*. Toronto, 1911, p. 228.

servances which they had learned and kept at the old village on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Intermarriage with the Flatheads gave a permanent status to those wandering Iroquois; but they were Catholics and were without church or missionary. The presence of a black-robe among them to baptize their children and to teach them the truths they themselves had been taught, was all that was needed to complete their happiness. The chief of those argonauts was Ignace La Mousse, who under a rude exterior hid a lively intelligence and the heart of an apostle. This old Iroquois often reminded his Flathead brethren of the happiness he and his people experienced while they lived under the influence of religion at Caughnawaga, and he longed for the day—which then seemed far distant—when he should be able to welcome a missionary among them. Meanwhile he assumed the office of catechist and spoke to them of the faith of his childhood, its doctrines and its obligations. Those poor natives listened attentively to things which must have sounded strange in their pagan ears, but they learned from Ignace in a vague way the principal mysteries of the faith, the great precepts of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer, the Sign of the Cross, and other religious practices. They regulated their lives by his teaching, sanctified Sundays, baptized the dying, and placed crosses over the graves of their dead. Two neighbouring tribes, friendly to the Flatheads, the Pend'Oreilles and the Nez Percés, had also heard his words and were likewise anxious to receive further instruction.

Merchant traders passing through their country had brought them the news that black-robos had reached St. Louis on the Missouri river. The old Caughnawagan, La Mousse, whose influence was still paramount, assembled the council of the tribe and proposed the sending of a deputation to ask that a missionary be sent to them. It was a rather daring undertaking, in those early days, to cross the Rocky Mountains and the plains of what are now the States of Oregon, Wyoming and Nebraska. There was danger of meeting enemies among the hostile Crows and Blackfeet; yet the proposal was accepted, and four Indians offered to start at once. They left their country in the spring of 1831, reached St. Louis only in the beginning of October, and delivered their message. But a keen disappointment awaited them there; missionaries were scarce, and no one could be spared to accompany them back. The brave envoys had other trials awaiting them. Worn out with the fatigues of the long journey, two of them fell ill and died at St. Louis, after they had received the last rites of the Church in which they sought membership. The other two set out for their country, but they never reached it, nor was it ever known what had befallen them.

After waiting anxiously four years for the return of the envoys, the Flatheads decided to send a second deputation. This time it was the old apostle, Ignace La Mousse himself, with his two sons, who offered to make the journey. They started out in the summer of 1835, and arrived

at St. Louis after a fatiguing journey, but they also were doomed to disappointment. Their zeal for the conversion of their nation excited the interest and sympathy of Bishop Rosati, but this prelate could only promise to send them missionaries as soon as he had them to spare. No black-robe having arrived after eighteen months of patient waiting, a third deputation, composed of three Flatheads and one New Percés, with old Ignatius once more at their head, started out again. Unhappily they never reached their journey's end, for they were slaughtered by the Sioux on the prairies. This crushing news did not dampen the ardour of the Flatheads. In 1839, a fourth deputation was decided on, and two Iroquois, who had a knowledge of the French tongue, arrived at Council Bluffs on the Mississippi, in the middle of September, where they had the good fortune to meet the Jesuit Father, Pierre de Smet, at the mission he had established, three years before. Encouraged by his recommendations, they continued their journey onward to St. Louis, and once more pressed their claims on Bishop Rosati. Their earnest appeal so often made, and so often set aside, could not fail to touch the heart of the zealous prelate. He wrote immediately to the General of the Jesuits in Rome, and received the promise that a missionary would be sent to them the following spring. This envoy was Father de Smet himself, who began a work among the Flatheads and other Western tribes, which his successors have continued to the present day.



## CHAPTER IX

### The Nineteenth Century

1820-1850

*Difficulties with Other Tribes—Change in the Indian Policy—The Seigniorship in Litigation—Caughnawaga Chiefs visit England—The King presents them with a Church-bell—The Rebellion of 1837. Brilliant Exploit of the Indians—Their Franchise Discussed—Attempts at Proselytism—Marcoux defends his Flock—The new Church.*

THE arrival, in 1819, of the Reverend Joseph Marcoux as missionary to the Indians proved to be the beginning of a new and strenuous era in the history of Caughnawaga. He was a man possessed of strong traits of character which revealed themselves in after years. Impulsive and perhaps too frank with his pen, which he wielded easily, he more than once displeased the civic authorities; devoted to his Indians, and zealous for their advancement, he was their advocate through thick and thin, and defended them even while they were plotting in secret against him; jealous of his prerogatives, he excited the violent opposition and resentment of certain people who tried to pervert his flock; enterprising, even daring, he showed this quality when, a quarter of a century later, he undertook and carried to completion the build-

ing of a ten-thousand-dollar temple in an Indian village. Add to these traits a restless activity, and we have the outlines of a man who, although over sixty-five years in his grave, is still known and talked about in Caughnawaga as if he were of yesterday.

Previous to his arrival in Caughnawaga, Father Marcoux had spent six years among the brethren at St. Regis, having gone thither in 1813, just in time to be an unwilling witness of the turmoil occasioned by the war then in progress. He had to begin at once a struggle against a double enemy. Eleazar Williams was trying to undermine the religion of his flock, while American soldiers, stationed on the New York border, were tampering with their loyalty by the offer of food supplies. Some of the Indians succumbed to this temptation, and in order to secure a generous share for themselves, secretly added the name of Father Marcoux to the list of suppliants. The food was always intercepted by the interested parties; no portion of it ever reached the missionary, who tells us that it was only in after years he learned how the trick was done. But the dishonourable act was bound to create a delicate situation for him with the ultra-loyalists, and from that time both the pastor of St. Regis and his flock were under suspicion.

In 1818, Marcoux wrote a long explanatory memoir which Monsignor Plessis presented to the Duke of Richmond, the governor-general; but the Bishop informed the writer that, notwithstanding

his effort to uphold the good name of the Indian village, public opinion was so strongly against its inhabitants that the Government had decided to give them no further aid. In order to spare him the spectacle of seeing his families in want, the prelate had decided to withdraw him from St. Regis and ask him to exchange places with the Reverend M. Dufresne of Caughnawaga.

Marcoux promptly obeyed, but the change was not without its compensations. The missionary's thorough knowledge of the Indian tongue gave him immediate access to the interests of his new flock, who at that moment needed a strong arm to save them from themselves. Drunkenness had become the prevailing vice in the village. Notwithstanding the appeals of the Bishop of Quebec and the threats of the agents of the Government, the Indians permitted rum-sellers to invade their reserve and to dispose at will of their poisonous decoctions. Bickering and strife among the warriors and abject poverty in their homes were the aftermath of their orgies. Marcoux made heroic efforts to stem the torrent, but he met with obstacles at every step. When, in 1823-24, white workmen, employed in quarrying stone behind the village for the new Lachine canal, began to bring in quantities of liquor to his Indians, he almost despaired of success, and engaged in a correspondence, which is still extant and which reveals the sentiments of a true shepherd. Again, in 1826, he had to protect his flock from insidious proselytisers who were introducing a Mohawk version

of the Gospel, poorly translated and, in Marcoux's own words, "more apt to throw ridicule on religion than to propagate it." "Give me a good version," he wrote to Isaac Purkis, a minister at Laprairie, "and far from opposing its distribution, I will be the first to spread it about. Let me have the control of the books on religion which my Indians use. You have the control in your own congregation; let me have it in mine; and do not come to sow seed in a field which is mine and which had been acquired for me at the price of the blood of my predecessors."

Happily, for the greater part of the year, Marcoux's flock were away on the hunt, where the occasions of meeting proselytisers who would rob them of their faith, and where rum-sellers who would brutalize their bodies were few and far between. In the first years of the nineteenth century, the Caughnawaga Indians kept up their reputation as wanderers perhaps more assiduously than any of the other domiciliated tribes. They were found hunting and trapping, not merely in their own province but also in distant parts of Ontario, and drew down on their heads the anger of the local tribes, the Missisaugas especially, who complained that the Caughnawagas were encroaching on their hunting grounds and destroying their beaver. The Oka Indians also complained that their Caughnawaga brethren, instigated by unprincipled traders, were trespassing on their hunting grounds and plundering game along the Upper Ottawa river and Lake Nipissing, a district which



had been the exclusive preserve of the Algonquins and the Nipissings since the conquest of Canada. The Oka Indians who did not possess seigniorial rights on any land whatever, and who were obliged to subsist entirely on the fruits of the chase, were particularly keen in their denunciations. If other tribes, they observed bitterly, were permitted to infringe on their domain, or if their hunting grounds were taken from them, they feared that they should soon be mere beggars wandering over the continent.

Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan C. Napier, the Indian agent, to whom these complaints were referred in the summer of 1827, tried to deal out even-handed justice to the contending parties. He ordered the Caughnawagas to keep within their own bounds and warned them that any attempt on their part to molest a neighbouring tribe, or to resort to personal violence on those who resented their acts of intrusion or trespass, would subject them to heavy penalties of the law and would entail the discontinuance of the king's bounty to the whole tribe. In reply to the complaints of the Algonquins and Nipissings of Oka, who claimed rights to territory for hunting purposes, even to the exclusion of white colonization, Napier was even more explicit.

"I know," he declared, "that you have no land of your own from which revenue is derived, like the Iroquois of Caughnawaga, and you will say that your situation is worse than that of your brethren there, and that in years to come, when



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your hunting grounds are all settled by white men, you must starve; but this is not so. If you are disposed to follow the example of the whites who are settled around you, the governor will give you the same advantages as they have received. He will allot to each family a small portion of land for the purpose of farming, but he cannot give any tract of land to be kept in a wild state as hunting grounds. I learn that there are Algonquins and Nipissings from the Lake and Iroquois from Caughnawaga up among the Chippewas at Toronto. If any of your young men are now hunting on the grounds of other tribes, let them be called home immediately and admonished to trespass no more.”<sup>1</sup>

The early dealings of the French Government with the Indians had been paternal. Ononthio was their Great Father. As children they were always free to go to him in their troubles, for he would listen to them, giving sound advice and pouring balm into their wounded hearts. The French cultivated their friendship not merely from motives of humanity and Christian charity, but also because Indian good will was a valuable asset in time of war. After the Conquest of 1760, the English followed on the same lines, but the tone assumed with the tribes was more formal and official. An Indian Department was formed in 1774, which was reorganized in 1782, under a superintendent-general. Friction between the civil and the military authorities as to the responsibility for the conduct of Indian affairs, led to the transfer

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence, *passim*.



of the Department to the military command in 1816.<sup>1</sup> The Indians were thus placed under the control of the commander of the Canadian forces, and dealings with them were entirely military in character.

In 1830, Sir George Murray, the Colonial Secretary, put an end to this system and placed the Indian Department under the control of the Civil Government. His policy was gradually to reclaim the native tribes from their state of semi-barbarism and dependence and to introduce among them the industrious and peaceful habits of civilized life. They were urged to build houses, to purchase stock and farming implements and to become self-supporting. Colonel Napier, the former Indian agent, was the first superintendent of the Montreal district under the new system, and had under his charge the Indians of St. Regis, of the Lake of Two Mountains, of St. Francis and of Caughnawaga. He was required to make frequent visits to the villages, distribute the annual presents, assist the chiefs in preserving peace and good order, and at the end of every year transmit to the Department a statistical report of the villages under his superintendence.

One of the first matters which was brought to his attention by the Indians of Caughnawaga was the old grievance, already familiar to the reader. The strip of Laprairie land which adjoined their seigniory and which, owing to their litigation with the original Jesuit owners and afterwards with the

1. *Handbook of the Indians of Canada*, p. 222.

Government, had become notorious, was again in the forefront. With the hope of getting their claim to it recognized, they sent a delegation to England, in 1807, for the purpose of interviewing Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of the Colonies; but this statesman, after having read the report which Sir James Craig made on their pretensions, wrote that "the Iroquois must clearly understand that he could not take upon himself to alter the boundaries of seigniories so long made and so formally established to the mutual satisfaction of all the parties who were concerned."<sup>1</sup> Lord Dalhousie had also decided against their claim in 1820, declaring that from the evidence which had been presented to him the land in question had never been theirs, "having been held and enjoyed by the late Order of Jesuits as seigniors in possession." Notwithstanding those repeated investigations and repudiations, the Indians continued to nurse their grievance.

1. Canadian Archives: Kempt Report. The Iroquois were accompanied on this voyage of 1807 by a young Huron, son of an Oka chief, who was sent by his father to claim the seignior of the Lake of Two Mountains from the Sulpicians, who were the rightful owners. A letter still preserved in the Archives in the Library of St. Sulpice, Montreal, gives interesting details of their visit to London. They had interviews with Lord Castlereagh, the Duke of Kent, Sir Robert Shore Milnes, Mr. Debartsch and Mr. Bouchette. Just as in the false accusation against the Jesuits before General Gage, in 1762, a lost document was made to play a chief part. One hundred years previously—so it was said—a priest at Oka told their forefathers that their title-deed to the seignior was not safe in their hands, and in consequence they should give it to him for greater security. This precious document was never returned to them—and that is how they lost their seignior! It was a repetition of the old fable of 1762, presented without order and without proof, *tel que l'aurait fait un tout petit écolier*, and the Oka envoy got no further in his quest.

Meanwhile the Indians were well treated while in London. They were confided to the care of a Frenchman who had lived in Canada; they were shown all the objects of interest; they received half a guinea a day for their subsistence; they were clothed—too simply, however, to suit their tastes; they were then sent home on the first available vessel.

Sir James Kempt had hardly assumed office, in 1828, when another delegation from Caughnawaga waited on him, clamouring for justice. Father Marcoux, who was their ordinary advocate and intermediary with the Government officials, asserted that by a voluntary or involuntary error, a most valuable part of their seignior, with its grist-mill and other buildings, was no longer in their possession, having been seized by the British Government with the rest of the Jesuit estates at the extinction of the Order in 1800. In his memoir Marcoux no longer laid stress on the document supposed to have been seized by the Jesuits during the preceding *régime*, a document which played such an important part in the lawsuit of 1762; nor did he mention Lord Dorchester's promise to give them back their land when the last Jesuit should have disappeared, a promise for which no corroboration had ever been found; he rather insisted on a third reason, which was a new development in this celebrated case, namely, a tradition that when the Jesuits built the grist-mill on the disputed territory, near the end of the seventeenth century, they first secured the permission of the Indians, thus tacitly admitting that the land belonged to them. "To destroy this tradition," added Marcoux, "positive proofs are required to the contrary. Indian traditions, although they may not have been written, have a degree of respectability like those of other peoples, and it does not suffice to give them an offhand denial."<sup>1</sup>

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. C. 269, p. 132.

Marcoux worked in season and out of season to have the claims of his Indians recognized by the Government, but this strenuous advocate apparently did not have access to the documents then carefully laid away in the National archives in Paris; and relying, as he did, on nebulous Indian traditions, he argued his case from incomplete data. In a copy of his *Analyse d'un Mémoire inédit*, preserved in the episcopal archives at Quebec, he complains that although the deed of concession expressly mentioned islands, islets and shoals, together with the land fronting them, these were no longer included in the seigniorship of Sault St. Louis. Hence he concluded that the Indians had, in some mysterious way, been unjustly deprived of the eastern end of their seigniorship. But he must have known that Sieur de Lauzon's concession of the seigniorship of Laprairie, in 1647, also mentioned the islands and the land in front of them. This overlapping of territory was, as we have seen, one of the reasons of Lafitau's visit to France at the end of 1717. Evidently Marcoux had never heard of this envoy's petition to the Regent's Council at Versailles, in January, 1718. That a royal decision was then given annexing the disputed strip to Laprairie, and thus putting an end to the ill-defined boundaries of both seigniorships, is an historical deduction that can hardly be disputed. This alone, and not vague accusations of their high-handed methods in dealing with the Indians of Caughnawaga, will explain the firm attitude of the Jesuits from 1718 down to the confiscation of their



estates in 1800. Authentic documents recording the decisions of this or that intendant against the pretensions of the seigneurs of Laprairie, between 1718 and 1762, supposed to be in the possession of the Indians, have never been forthcoming. If they had ever existed, the Jesuits as well as the Indians would have had some knowledge of them.<sup>1</sup>

The claim urged, in 1821, did not fare any better at the hands of Sir James Kempt. "Guided by the decisions of Lord Dalhousie and Sir James Craig," the administrator reminded them that the accuracy of the boundary lines which had been made by the sworn surveyors of Lord Dorchester had been admitted by the king's attorney-general, and had been accepted as final not merely by three judgments of the courts of the country, but also by His Majesty's Government. Such being the circumstances, he could offer them no consolation.

Foiled in their latest attempt the Indians decided to make a supreme effort; they resolved to appear in person before the King of England, the fountain-head of law and justice. The Bishop of Montreal wrote to Marcoux urging him to dissuade his Indians from making a useless journey. "Besides," wrote the prelate, "it has been shown by

1. Marcoux, the great protagonist of the Indians in this affair, was evidently not sure of his ground. At one time he asserted that the French Government authorized the Jesuits to hold the strip of land; at another time it was the English. He wrote in 1728 that the land had been given to the Jesuits in order to provide funds to support the mission, and asserted categorically, "Cet arrangement avait été fait entre eux et le gouvernement français sans la participation des sauvages." Later on he wrote: "Les Jésuites ont retenu la jouissance à la Conquête après s'être sans doute fait autoriser à cela par quelqu'une des nouvelles autorités comme ayant une certaine prescription dans cette jouissance." The zealous missionary was working on hypotheses of his own making. (Caughnawaga Archives).

its very titles that the land never belonged to the Indians but to the Jesuits; and even though the king might not favour these latter, he would consider the half league of land as theirs after a prescription of nearly seventy years, during which time the Indians entered no legal opposition.”<sup>1</sup> Sir James Kempt was displeased when he received the news of the proposed embassy, for he had already told them that he could do as much for them in Canada as could be done in England. The Caughnawaga Indians, however, were determined to interview the king, and in the autumn of 1829, overriding the wise counsel of their bishop, and the displeasure of the administrator, two chiefs, Sonatsiowane and Sawennowanne, accompanied by George Antoine Delorimier as interpreter, crossed the Atlantic to lay at the feet of William IV the petition of a “nation which was once proud and opulent and which treated with kings on a footing of equality.”<sup>2</sup>

A memorandum of their interview with Sir George Murray, the colonial secretary in Downing

1. “Il est d’ailleurs démontré par ses propres titres que cette terre n’a jamais appartenu aux sauvages mais aux Jésuites. Et quand même le Roi ne serait pas ayant cause de ces derniers, il aurait encore prescrit cette demi-lieue de terre par une possession de près de soixante-dix ans contre les sauvages qui ne s’y sont point légalement opposés dans le temps.”—*Letter to Marcoux*. (Caughnawaga Archives).

2. Canadian Archives. Indian Correspondence. C. 268, p. 869. “When there was question of sending a deputation to England,” wrote Marcoux, five years later, “I spent many months writing memoirs, requests, copying documents, *pièces justificatives*, etc., without which they would have obtained nothing . . . How many letters have I written for the Indians since that time! A hundred pounds would not pay for all the writing if a notary had been called in to do the work.” (Episc. Arch. Montreal.) Marcoux wrote his memoir to William IV in French, and had it translated by Waller, a journalist of the period. (Caughnawaga Archives). For an interesting sketch of Sir Jocelyn Waller, see *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Oct. 1920.

Street, on January 15, 1830, is preserved in the Canadian archives at Ottawa. It was their wish to meet the king in person, but they were informed that His Majesty was living a retired life in the country and that no expectation could be held out that he would be able to receive them. However, as they insisted, the colonial secretary expressed the conviction that the king would be very glad to see them if he were in town and sufficiently at leisure before their departure from England. The deputies then represented their case to Sir George Murray, dwelling on the value to them of the strip of land of which, as they contended, they had been unjustly deprived and of the unfairness shown them by the Canadian government.

The secretary, in his reply, gave them little hope of redress. Legal decisions had been pronounced against their pretensions and he did not feel at liberty, nor in fact was he able, to disturb what had already been decided by law. Besides, the home government could not interfere in matters which solely concerned the colonial administration. And yet, as he was anxious to do all in his power for the welfare of their tribe, it would give him great pleasure to offer them some sort of compensation, if any method could be discovered. This was a new point of view, a rare opportunity to ask for favours, and the Caughnawaga deputies immediately informed the colonial secretary that their church and presbytery were in a ruinous state. They also needed a bell, and there were other charges with which they were

burdened. These requests Sir George Murray graciously offered to meet, and having had the promise from him that letters would be given them to show to their tribesmen the result of their deliberations in England, they withdrew. In a second interview Murray informed them that "all their just grievances would be redressed," and he gave them despatches to carry back to the administrator of the colony.

The delegates returned to Canada more or less disappointed. They had failed on the main issue, namely, the restoration of the strip of land, but the voyage to England had not been wholly unprofitable. They had the promise of a church-bell and of a sum of money to repair their buildings. In conformity with a wish expressed in the colonial secretary's despatches, Sir James Kempt sent Captain Piper, of the Royal Engineers, to Caughnawaga, for the purpose of estimating the cost of the repairs to the church and the missionaries' residence. After an examination, it was reckoned that an outlay of £1,023—over five thousand dollars—would be required, a sum which undoubtedly surprised the administrator, and which, later on, became a fresh topic of correspondence with the colonial secretary in England.

The summer months of 1830 had passed away and no news reached Caughnawaga about the bell which had been promised; no word about the money for the reparation of the church; no inkling from Kempt that any grievance was about to be redressed. The Indians of Caughnawaga were



growing impatient, and the energetic Father Marcoux wrote to the Indian Department:

"Our chiefs returned on the twenty-fourth of March. I have waited since that time to have some news to give you, but am sorry to tell you that we are no further advanced in our affair than we were last year at this date, the time of the departure of our chiefs for England. We have not even received our bell, which was to be sent to us in the spring. Immediately after their return home, we sent to Quebec the despatches with which they were charged for His Excellency Sir J. Kempt. To gain some favour for the Indians in public opinion, which I had hoped would influence the Government a little in this affair, I published immediately in the English and French newspapers the memoir of Sir Geo. Murray, making at the same time a few reflections on the justice of their demands. What became of all this? Sir J. Kempt got into a little bad humour. In his letter to the chiefs he told them that he could have done for them just as much as Sir George Murray if they had submitted to him the same documents. But this was simply evasive language, for during the autumn of 1828 the chiefs themselves were at Quebec, and submitted to him precisely the same papers, or rather copies of the papers, which they took with them to England. Nevertheless, in order not to appear to despise too much the instructions of Sir George Murray, and not have indiscreet demands on the part of the chiefs, the governor sent an engineer here, with a foreman, to see what

repairs were to be made on the church and presbytery. After having examined the church in particular, and made their calculations, which took them two days, their estimate amounted to £1,023. Having returned to the governor-general with their reply, he answered that he had not sufficient to furnish this sum, and would refer the whole to Sir George Murray, whose answers should come before autumn, but we are now in November and no news yet. As far as the indemnity, which was promised to the chiefs for the piece of land which was detached from their seigniory, is concerned, it is said that it would be submitted to His Majesty.

"In the absence of the chiefs, and since their return, I furnished, at the wish of the governor, more proofs in favour of the demands of the Indians, besides those mentioned in the memoir, so that Sir Jas. Kempt should now be convinced that the piece of land claimed as appertaining to the Indians, and which was, through an error, if not by positive injustice, taken away from them, rightfully belongs to them. This conduct on the part of the present Government, which appears to sanction injustices of this kind, is not apt to gain the confidence of the Indians, who are not to be despised as much as one would think. I need not tell you what you have to do for our Indians; you know this better than I; and I am persuaded that you could succeed in getting at least one of the three things which were promised them—the bell, the repairs, or the indemnity; perhaps the whole three." <sup>1</sup>

Father Marcoux's object was to set the wheels of the Indian Department in motion, but he was not aware that meanwhile, both in London and in Canada, changes had taken place in the administration. Viscount Goderich—the future Earl Ripon—had succeeded Sir George Murray as secretary of the colonies, and Lord Aylmer had been appointed to replace Sir James Kempt. The missionary's letter, however, was forwarded to Downing Street, and on May 15, 1831, a despatch reached Governor Aylmer from the colonial office, which read as follows:

“I am directed by Viscount Goderich to transmit to Your Lordship herewith a letter which has been addressed to Dr. Teark, and by him referred to this department by the priest of the Caughnawaga Indians, a deputation from whom recently visited this country on matters connected with the welfare of their tribe. Among other advantages which were conceded to them by Sir George Murray, they were led to expect that they would be provided with a bell for their presbytery, and this promise would have been kept at the time if they could have stated the size of the bell which was required. Lord Goderich feels every disposition to carry into effect Sir Geo. Murray's intention in this respect, and he has desired me to request that Your Lordship will cause a notification to be conveyed to the Indians and direct the proper person to inspect the presbytery and report the size of the bell which should be required to be sent out, in order that no

further delay may take place in forwarding one from this country.”<sup>1</sup>

The information was no doubt furnished promptly, for the church-bell was sent out from England in the summer of 1832, and reached Montreal, where by order of Lord Aylmer it was admitted free of duty.<sup>2</sup> When it arrived at Caughnawaga, it took its place beside a smaller companion which, tradition would have us believe, had reached the mission from Deerfield, Massachusetts, one hundred and twenty-eight years before.

The gift of money, which was to accompany the bell for the repairing of the church building, was not so easily obtained. Sir James Kempt's expert, as we have seen, had estimated that the work contemplated at Caughnawaga would cost over five thousand dollars, a sum which rather displeased Lord Goderich, who could not see his way clear to authorize so large an outlay, for in another letter to Lord Aylmer from Downing Street, he wrote:

“I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your predecessor's despatch of May 10th last, transmitting a report, plan and estimate of the expenses or repairing the church and presbytery belonging to the Caughnawaga Indians, amounting to £1,023. At the conference which Sir George Murray held with the deputies, he assured them of his disposition to extend to them such advantages as they would have enjoyed had the land claimed by them continued in the possession of

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. R. W. Hay to Lord Aylmer

2. Ibid. Indian Correspondence. C. 270.



the Jesuits. With this Sir George Murray led them to expect that a small annual sum would be granted to them to enable them to keep their church and presbytery in repair . . . . With every disposition to extend His Majesty's bounty to the Iroquois and to grant them some assistance in the repair of the church, etc., it never was in Sir George Murray's contemplation to sanction an expense of the magnitude required in the estimates transmitted in your predecessor's despatch. It had been understood that the charge of erecting a church, such as is generally built for the accommodation of English settlers in North America, did not often exceed £800, and the repairs of the Indian church, therefore, was estimated at a moderate sum. The utmost expenditure which I can at present authorize for this purpose is £250, which must be appropriated to such repairs as are indispensable. You will also explain to the Indians that this is the extent to which assistance can be accorded to them, and it must be received as not arising from any right which they possess but as the bounty of His Majesty." <sup>1</sup>

A warrant was issued for the money on July 13, 1831, and the amount was applied to the repairs of the church which had been built by the Jesuits, over a hundred years previously.

These gifts were not the only ones for which the Indians of Caughnawaga were debtors to the bounty of the Crown; for the custom of distributing presents annually in the various reserves had come

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. G. 21.

down from the French *régime*. It had existed before the Conquest as one of the means employed by the French to gain and keep the affections of those children of nature. Although there is no record of any agreement on the part of the British Government to retain the custom of annual gratuities, the practice since 1760 led the Indians to expect them and to consider the Government pledged to their maintenance "as long as they remained a tribe." In the eighteenth century, the British adopted the practice of making the Indians, especially the chiefs, presents of silver medals, gorgets, uniforms, and assorted military ornaments. In the beginning of the nineteenth, the presents assumed a more useful form, such as blankets, guns, ammunition, fishing-tackle, kitchen-ware, pipes and tobacco.

Some of the officials in the Indian Department raised objections to the custom of giving annual presents; they feared that it would have the effect of encouraging natural indolence and aversion to labour, just as it would create an undue feeling of dependence upon the protection and bounty of the king. In 1827, at the suggestion of the colonial secretary, the Earl of Dalhousie proposed the commutation of the annual presents for a certain sum of money, a proposal which was combated two years later by Sir James Kempt, who felt that, until an improvement had taken place in the habits of the Indians, it would be unwise to give them money of which they would in all probability make an improper use.

In 1836, the suggestion as to a commutation was renewed by Lord Glenelg, but the Executive Council of Lower Canada again reported unfavourably. It would be fraught with mischief and would hasten the degradation of the Indians. However, before the final answer was sent to Lord Glenelg, his proposal was submitted to the chiefs of the various reserves, with a request for their opinion. The answer of the Caughnawaga chiefs was as promptly given as it was unequivocal; there was no mistaking their meaning. "Tell our Father," said they, referring to the governor, "that we, one and all, especially our wives and children, beg and pray of him to have the goodness not even to think of altering for us the present mode of distributing annually articles of clothing. Tell him that if the present system were changed and we were given money instead of the articles we receive, by far the larger number of his red children would soon be reduced to direst distress, for the greatest part of what we receive would be spent in spirituous liquor. Tell him that we have sad examples before us. We were eye-witnesses of one instance that took place recently at St. Regis, that made us open our eyes when we went to get a certain sum of money due us by the United States Government. The American Indians had upwards of two thousand dollars to receive on the day the payment was made to us. The council-room was full of tavern and grogshop keepers, with their account books and their arms open to receive our poor brothers' hard-earned money for



REV. JOSEPH MARCOUX

*From an old painting preserved    Caughnawaga*





nothing but rum which they had advanced to them on credit. Upwards of a thousand dollars were paid to those rum-sellers. Were we to receive money instead of blankets, such would be the case with many of us. Money we can do with as we please, but our Father's blankets and clothing we have not permission to sell; nor will the whites purchase them from us, for in so doing they become liable to heavy fines. Tell our Father that the Indians generally give their money for drink, the whites having taught them this habit. Even in Caughnawaga we are suffering. Many of our men gain a dollar by shooting down the rafts, but they never bring any part of it back to the village. They return intoxicated, without a penny in their pocket. Therefore, ask our Father to continue the present method of giving blankets and clothing as our annual presents; otherwise, most of our wives and children will go naked. Our chief and only dependence for clothing is the bounty of our Great Father the King." <sup>1</sup>

The white population had always been a source of contamination for the Indians, and while contact could not very well be avoided outside the reserve, the presence of white settlers thereon was resented. Several had got a footing in the village and were occupying lots to which, with the exception of the heirs of Chevalier de Lorimier whose title dated back to 1787, they had no legal right. One hundred and eighty-eight acres were held by outsiders in 1835, and in September of that year the chiefs of

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. *passim*.

Caughnawaga sent a memorial to Lord Gosford, complaining of the presence of white men on their lands, "bad birds with black hearts who use honeyed and bewitching words to turn the heads" of His Excellency's red children. The memorial prayed that legal steps should be taken to remove those interlopers and to restore the land to the Indians. This document was submitted to Attorney-General Ogden, who decided that as the land in question belonged to the king, the only way to obtain a reversal of it to the Indians was to institute suits against the trespassers. He took care to add that formerly and up till a recent period it was usual to prosecute white persons settling in Indian villages, but subsequent legislation had decided that His Majesty's liege subjects should not be molested except by the regular procedure of the law. A similar decision was given two years later by Solicitor-General Sullivan who, among other things, asserted that inasmuch as "all the real and immovable estates in the Province of Lower Canada, which had heretofore belonged to the late Order of the Jesuits, have become and do now belong to our Lord the King, the said King is now the true owner and proprietor of the seigniory of Sault St. Louis as having formed part of the said estates."<sup>1</sup> We have here what seems to be an interesting development of the "nice, sharp quilllets of the law" and its glorious uncertainties. As we learned in a previous chapter, General Gage, in 1762, took away the seigniory

1. Caughnawaga Archives, *passim*.

of Sault St. Louis from the Jesuits and handed it over to the Indians. From that year it had ceased to be a Jesuit estate. And yet seventy-five years later, the same seigniory was claimed as royal property because it was one of the Jesuit estates which the Crown had seized in 1800.

Piecemeal they win this acre first, then that,  
Glean on, and gather up the whole estate. <sup>1</sup>

The political unrest which prevailed in Lower Canada in those years had no meaning for the Indians, who were simply wards of the Crown, who were living on the various reserves in comparative ease and tranquillity, and who were not interested in the question of responsible government. Royal bounties came to them at regular intervals and kept them submissive and in good humour. But they were witnesses of the discontent which was smouldering among their white neighbours. Even while the war of 1812-14 was dragging its slow length along, popular resentment was growing against the manner in which England was allowing her crown colony to be governed, and for a score of years there seemed no redress for the colonists except by their adopting measures which would sooner or later entail bloodshed and loss of life. An English bureaucracy had got a grip on Canada, which was looked upon as a fertile field for exploitation. The native-born, who were in the large majority and who had a natural right to direct their own affairs, were excluded from

1. ALEXANDER POPE: *Satires of Dr. Donne*, II, L. 91.



every office of responsibility.<sup>1</sup> Nor were those methods confined to one Province: Upper and Lower Canada and the Maritime Provinces were in the power of the bureaucrats, who jealously looked after their own interests and who relied on the support of Downing Street and the colonial governors to prevent any break in their monopoly.

In describing the conditions which prevailed in Canada previous to the insurrection of 1837, Sir Thomas Erskine May, afterwards Lord Farnborough, wrote: "The colonies offered a wide field of employment for friends, connections, and political partisans of the home government. The offices in England fell short of the demand, and appointments accordingly were multiplied abroad. Of these many of the most lucrative were executed by deputy. Infants in the cradle were endowed with colonial appointments to be executed through life by convenient deputies. Extravagant fees or salaries were granted in Downing Street and spent in England, but paid out of colonial revenue. Other offices, again, to which residence was attached, were given to men wholly unfit for employment at home, but who were supposed to be equal to colonial service, where indolence, incapacity, or doubtful character might escape exposure."<sup>2</sup>

The Executive Councils composed of those arrogant colonial bureaucrats, who had the governors

1. "The movement of '37 was a settled plan to goad and drive individuals into a resistance to personal violence, so as to make a case with which the Ministry might be able to go to parliament and ask for the destruction of the act of 1791."—E. B. O'Callaghan to F. X. Garneau, dated Albany, July 17, 1852. (*Dominion Archives.*)

2. *Constitutional Hist. of England*, London, 1912. Vol. II, p. 366.

as their protectors and spokesmen, were intent on keeping in their own hands the control of the patronage at the disposal of the Crown. Opposition to their wishes was met by violence; newspapers were suppressed; writers were imprisoned; assemblies were dissolved; public opinion was despised. In Lower Canada matters assumed a more aggressive turn. Office-holding and the ruling of citizens against their will seemed only a minor grievance to the people, when compared with the attempts which were made in Parliament to deprive the vast majority of them of their language and their religion. At various times, bills were proposed which, if they became law, would practically accomplish this result. The Canadian French felt all this injustice keenly. During a quarter of a century they had sought redress by petitions and delegations to England, but their efforts had been seemingly fruitless. They finally decided to take matters into their own hands. In November, 1837, serious outbreaks occurred at St. Denis and St. Charles, on the Richelieu river, and at St. Eustache near the Lake of Two Mountains. Blood was shed and several lives were lost, but the insurgent patriots, poorly equipped to resist the seasoned British troops, soon felt the iron hand of Sir John Colborne who proceeded against them.

The Indians at Caughnawaga had no special interests involved and looked on in silence at those tragic events—possibly because their services had not yet been required. In December, 1837, news had reached Montreal that the patriots had reor-

ganized at St. Eustache and were on their way to Lachine to seize the arms and ammunition which were known to be stored there. Montreal was suddenly thrown into a state of mild excitement. Within the space of a few hours, four thousand volunteers, old and young, merchants, professional men, clerks, mechanics, labourers, were mustered and were proceeding quickly towards the Lower Lachine road. Word had been sent to the Indians of Caughnawaga, recalling their ancient covenant, and asking them to lend their help, when over two hundred Indians crossed the river to join the loyalists.

"What a cheering sight it was there," exclaims a writer who was a witness of the scene he describes; "the river was literally covered with Indian canoes; every warrior in Caughnawaga was crossing to join the Lachine brigade. A cheer of welcome from the little band of volunteers greeted the arrival of the Indian warriors, and their wild war-whoop in response was a sound, a sight, a scene, the like of which will never be heard or seen again in this Province." <sup>1</sup>

The alarm was a false one; the Lachine brigade was disbanded as quickly as it had been mustered, and the winter of 1837-38 passed quietly enough. But the lull was only temporary; the justice of the cause of the patriots and their failure in the previous autumn along the Richelieu and at St. Eustache, left only bitterness in their hearts. Sounds of murmuring and discontent continued to be heard

1. FRASER: *Canadian Pen and Ink Sketches*, p. 60.

in various sections. Trouble, expected at any moment, actually broke out in November, 1838. The south side of the St. Lawrence was in open rebellion, the chief centres of organized resistance being in the neighbourhood of Beauharnois and Chateauguay. The promptness with which the Caughnawaga warriors had responded to the loyalist call to arms, the previous year, had an ominous meaning for their white neighbours, the patriots of Chateauguay, and it was resolved to interview the Indians and to try, if possible, to win them over.

Several versions, differing slightly in detail, are given of what occurred on the historic Sunday morning of November 4, 1838, when seventy or eighty of the patriots marched to Caughnawaga to persuade the Indians to espouse their cause. In one version, published in 1856, we read that while "the inhabitants were at worship a party of insurgents surrounded the church. The Indians immediately turned out and the chief, setting the example, seized the person nearest him and wrested the musket from his hand. The others surrendered as prisoners to the number of sixty-five, and tied with their own sashes and garters, were taken to Montreal."<sup>1</sup> In a second version,<sup>1</sup> we learn that the Indians expressed surprise at the sudden appearance of men who claimed to be friends and who came armed to treat with them. That was not the proper way to act; before any parley could

1. ROY: *Histoire du Canada*, Montréal 1856, p. 185.

1. FRASER: *Canadian Pen and Ink Sketches*, p. 75.



be started they must lay down their arms. The unsuspecting patriots did as they were told, when their guns were suddenly seized by the Indians and their owners overpowered.

David, in his history of the Rebellion,<sup>1</sup> is more complete and undoubtedly gives the true version of what took place. Before starting out for Caughnawaga, the patriots disarmed the "bureaucrats" of Chateauguy and the neighbourhood and made them prisoners, and then resolved to do a similar work at Caughnawaga. Forty of them, armed with sticks and pikes, set out for the Indian village, where they arrived at sunrise. They halted in a copse in the vicinity and sent five of the chief men to sound the dispositions of the Indians. While those envoys were employed in urging the Indians to lend them their guns, a squaw caught sight of the rest of the patriots and ran frightened to the village to relate what she had seen. The alarm was given at once. The Indians seized their guns, and the chiefs quickly decided to coax the patriots into the village and make them prisoners. Five or six Indians went ahead and invited them to a parley. They approached, unsuspecting and unarmed, and when the chiefs, with their forty warriors, had them at their mercy, the order was given to seize them. Sixty-four patriots were then taken prisoners and eleven others during the day, making a total of seventy-five, the rest having escaped through the woods to their encampment at Chateauguy.

1. L.-O. DAVID: *Les Patriotes de 1837-38*, p. 175-176.

The Indians crossed over to Lachine with their prisoners and then escorted them along a road which ran through Cote St. Paul, on their way to the jail which had just been built in Montreal. It was a sad procession of young men, all in the prime of life and manhood. Fraser tells us that he well remembered their imploring and anxious looks, and, though fifty years had passed when he wrote, he could hardly restrain the "welling tear" as the scene of that Sunday morning rose up before him. A few of the young patriots were afterwards liberated; others were transported to Bermuda, while others were sent over the Pacific to New South Wales. Dom William Ullathorne, Benedictine missionary in Australia, afterwards Bishop of Birmingham, England, tells us that, "being all respectable farmers and farmer's sons, they were kept aloof from the criminal convicts, placed on a government farm and conducted themselves with great propriety."<sup>1</sup> It was this Australian prelate who accompanied Monsignor Forbin-Janson on his visit to the Earl of Derby, in 1842, to plead for their release.

Others, finally, were sentenced to death. When the Caughnawaga Indians learned that two of the prisoners taken by them were to meet this fate, their sympathies were aroused, and they sent a touching letter to Sir John Colborne asking for the freedom of the unfortunate men. "They did us

1. *Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, London, 1888, p. 222. The names of the fifty-eight Canadian patriots whom the English prelate met in New South Wales may be found in the *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, Vol. VIII, pp. 70-71.

no harm," they wrote; "they did not shed the blood of our brethren. Why shed theirs? The services which we rendered His Majesty and those which we will not hesitate to render in the future, give us the hope that our prayer will find its way to the heart of Your Excellency." But the prayer of the Iroquois did not find its way to Colborne's heart, and the prisoners suffered the extreme penalty of the law for a cause which has since been recognized as just.

Their daring exploit, however, threw the Caughnawaga Indians into the limelight; they were looked upon as promising allies, and their services were immediately sought. Six days later, November 10, 1838, they became part of the Lachine brigade, eight hundred strong, which reached Chateaugay. Meanwhile the patriots had fled to the woods, their camp was deserted, but this did not prevent the invaders from beginning a work of devastation. Fires were set here and there, and for a time it seemed as if the village and the surrounding farmhouses would all be destroyed. Fully a score of barns and homesteads, Fraser tells us, fell a prey to the devouring element before order was restored. "It was a sickening sight," he wrote, "to see poor helpless women and children, in utter grief and stricken down with terror, begging protection. Their little treasures, their household goods, the homes of their youth, all vanishing before their eyes; their fathers, husbands, brothers—the assembled patriots of yesterday—now scattered wild

through the woods, homeless, friendless, seeking shelter where they may.<sup>1</sup>

For the moment no one would admit responsibility for the burning of the homes at Chateauguay; all pretended ignorance, but the ringleaders were soon found out, and were ordered by Captain Campbell to return to Caughnawaga. And yet, be it said to their credit, it was not the Indians who were guilty of the barbarous destruction of French-Canadian homes, but the white men of the Lachine brigade. This is acknowledged by the author we are quoting, who was a member of the brigade. "The men became unmanageable," he wrote, "whether through drink or disappointment of not getting a fight, but in their madness, it was said, they set fire to ten houses before they could be stopped, placed under arrest, and ordered back to Lachine in disgrace."

The news of the capture of seventy-five "rebels" by the Caughnawaga Indians was sent at once to England by Sir John Colborne, commander of the forces,<sup>2</sup> and less than three months later, January 26, 1839, a note came from Lord Glenelg, the colonial secretary, asking what the British Government could do to show its appreciation of the deed. "It has occurred to me," he wrote, "that it might be satisfactory to the Indians of Caughnawaga who so gallantly defeated the rebels who collected at their village on the fourth of November last, as reported in your despatch of the day follow-

1. FRASER: *Canadian Pen and Ink Sketches*, p. 91.

2. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. Q. 245, p. 272-273.



ing, to know that their conduct on that occasion has been brought under the notice of the Queen and has met with Her Majesty's commendation. I have therefore to request that you will, if it would appear to you advisable, convey to them Her Majesty's approbation of their conduct in this instance. And I wish you to consider and report to me whether it might not be expedient in the case of annual distribution of presents to these Indians to substitute medals, or other honorary rewards to such as distinguished themselves in this transaction, for the clothing, etc., usually given them; or whether in any other method their good conduct might be acknowledged in a public manner."

The share the Indians of Caughnawaga took in the events of 1838 drew them out of obscurity and gave them a prestige that seemed to merit some sort of recognition at the hands of the Government, possibly the franchise, and the project of granting them the civil and political rights possessed by other subjects of the Crown was discussed in 1843. When Father Marcoux, their missionary, was asked for his opinion, he replied that the time had not yet come for that change; if it were intended to emancipate them, it should be done with a great deal of caution and by degrees, exhorting them meanwhile to exercise their rights one by one and then to judge by results. For instance, it would be well to begin by giving legal authority to the chiefs, enabling them, without being liable to be troubled by law, to confiscate

all spirituous liquors brought into the village and throw them into the river; to send to jail all persons resisting them; to break up houses where people of bad character assemble; to settle disputes summarily; to punish delinquents by taking from them their annual presents for one or several years.

Major Plenderleath Christie, of the Indian Department, was also asked his opinion on the granting of citizenship to the Indians, but the reply of this official was not satisfactory; the religious prejudice with which he seemed to be deeply imbued, seriously affected his judgment; for to his narrow mind the whole difficulty was that those Indians could never exercise the franchise as long as they were held by the "double chain of pauperism and mental servitude." They were said to be under the domination of their chiefs, but ever since the conquest of Canada, eighty years previously, the chiefs themselves had been and were still under the domination of the priests. Christie gave an illuminating example of the despotic power of Father Marcoux over his Indian flock.

"Some years since," he wrote, "I visited Caughnawaga, accompanied by a medical officer. We went together to the priest's house, where all the sick and ailing people were assembled in order to make known their ailments to the officer through the priest, who interpreted them in French. The officer was imperfectly acquainted with French, and once I was obliged to explain the priest's words to him in English. The same course was observed

when directions were given through the priest about the remedies. At that time, the latter had just completed an Iroquois dictionary, begun by his predecessor. I requested a sight of it, which he granted. I congratulated him on the termination of his labours and hoped he would send it to the press, as many persons would be glad to purchase such a curiosity; but he replied that he had no such intention. I then enquired what use it was. His answer was: 'For the mission.' Thus it appeared that the labour which was commenced before the Conquest was only designed to give the priests control over the chiefs, and through them to rule the community; for neither chiefs nor people were ever taught the language."

It is not very clear what the foolish example cited by Major Christie was meant to prove, or how the publication of a French-Iroquois dictionary could militate for or against the granting of civil and political rights to the Indians. Although Iroquois was the language Father Marcoux employed in his sermons and instructions, the Indians of Caughnawaga were also familiar with the French tongue. These two languages were, in the judgment of the pastor, sufficient for the practical needs of his flock.

The missionary had his own peculiar troubles with the officials of the epoch. Napier, the Indian superintendent, gives an instance of his opposition to the teaching of English which must have excited animosity in certain circles. He tells us that "in 1835, Lord Aylmer appointed an English

teacher of the Roman Catholic persuasion to conduct a school at this village, but like a former similar attempt on the part of a society for promoting education and industry among the Indians and destitute settlers, failed, owing to the prejudice of the missionary, Rev. Mr. Marcoux, against the English language. The teacher was withdrawn in consequence, by order of Lord Gosford, in 1838." Wishing to make out as bad a case as possible against the Caughnawaga pastor, the Superintendent of Indian affairs did not give the fundamental reason why he was opposed to an English school in the village. Had Napier been frank he would have admitted that the missionary was opposed to the language not because it was English but rather because, as John Henry Newman showed a few years later, the English language was an easy channel for proselytism.

It does not appear, however, that Marcoux was so opposed to the training of his young flock in English as the Government officials wished to make out. An English school was established in the old fort at St. John, previous to 1831, which was frequented by children from Caughnawaga. If education was backward among the latter, in those years, the fault must be attributed to the apathy and unconcern of the Indian character rather than to the prejudices of the missionary. A letter written in April, 1831, by C. W. Forest, the teacher at St. John, to Major Christie, and preserved in the Dominion archives at Ottawa, gives us a glimpse of the conditions which Marcoux



and the Indian Department had to contend with. Forest relates his troubles in typical schoolmaster style.

"I have only two Indians boys at present under my tuition," he writes. "In my report you will observe that No. 1 (Alex. McComber) has not received instruction at my school since the seventh of February last. The cause of his leaving school may be properly understood by the following remarks. He informed me that his father commanded him to state to me that he objected to his writing upon slates, and that if I persisted in his conformity to the rules of the school in this respect, he was immediately to return. I replied that I could not make any distinction in the school without causing disorder, and that as he had an opportunity of writing in his book two hours every day, besides his other exercises, he must have made an improper statement to his father, with a design to avoid his studies and leave school. After his absence from the school for a few days, I went to the Indian village to make enquiries concerning him, when I ascertained from his mother—his father being then from home—that he had made a false statement concerning his writing, which had occasioned his father to send me the above mentioned message. I have taken no measures to obtain the return of this youth, as his aversion to education seems to grow with his growth, and his refractory disposition, when excited by reproof, must tend to produce an influence which would indubitably militate against the moral and in-

tellectual interests of the other boys who are so seriously placed under my care. No. 3 (Ignace Purqui) is improving very fast. His father has purchased a book for him, at the expense of three shillings, to enter his sums. You may perceive the fact and its consequent influence in this particular. No. 6 (Peerish) only within the last quarter has evinced a disposition to learn, and I expect that in a short time he will redeem his past stupidity. I have not used any means to receive any more boys from Caughnawaga.”<sup>1</sup>

Marcoux's attitude in matters dealing with religion had made him enemies in high places, but the Caughnawaga missionary was not the only one who had to take radical means to safeguard the traditional faith of his flock. Judging from documents we have been able to consult, it would seem that religious propagandism was rampant in those years, and that positive efforts were made to wean the Indians in other villages from the teachings which had been handed down to them by their forefathers from the seventeenth century. It will suffice to quote a report of Superintendent Chesley, who resided at the St. Regis mission and who gives the story of his failure. "From the earliest settlement of the Indians at St. Regis, a period of about eighty years," he writes, "no attempt was ever made by the residing clergy to establish schools among them; on the contrary, as often as the proposition was made by the Government as well as by individuals, so often have the

1. Canadian Archives: Indian Correspondence. C. 170, p. 25.

resident priests opposed it. On the ninth of July, 1835, through my exertions, aided by Major Plenderleath Christie and the Rev. George Archibald, rector of Cornwall, a school was opened by the Rev. E. Williams, a native of Caughnawaga, who was educated in Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> Seventeen children were in attendance at the opening of the school, which number continued to increase until it reached forty. For the support of the school one hundred pounds sterling was obtained from the society in England, also books to the value of twenty-five pounds from a society in New York, together with money and clothing to the amount of seventy-five pounds by voluntary subscriptions, besides a salary from the Government out of the appropriation from the Indian department for the Rev. Mr. Williams, as a teacher, of twenty-four pounds a year. About two months after the school had been in operation, the resident missionary, Rev. Mr. Marcoux,<sup>2</sup> notified the parents of the children who attended the school to withdraw them immediately under pain of his displeasure and the anathema of the Church, which threat was in part carried out to the reduction of the school to seven children."

This was the same Williams who, in 1812, endeavoured to undermine the loyalty of the Indians

1. Williams was not a native of Caughnawaga. He was the adopted son of the Williams family. Bishop Forbes writes: "In my researches through the registers of Caughnawaga, I found that Eleazar Williams could not have been the child of Thomas Williams and his Indian wife." Cf. *antea*, pp. 323-327. See also *Handbook of American Indians*, Wash., 1910, pp. 953-955.

2. Francis Xavier Marcoux, a cousin of the Caughnawaga missionary, residing at St. Regis since 1832.

and sent a messenger to urge them to take up arms against England. In 1835, he was a tool in Chesley's hands, ready to rob the Indians of the faith of their ancestors. He persisted in teaching the seven children until the arrival of Lord Gosford who, upon a complaint of the Bishop of Montreal against his interference with the people at St. Regis, withdrew his salary, and with it the patronage of the Government.

Other instances might be cited from the official correspondence of the period to show that efforts were being made to pervert the Indians. According to the testimony of Major Christie, who appears to have been one of the prime movers in the disagreeable work, a school for Indians had been opened in Chateauguay, in 1829, and "had," he wrote, "been the means of educating several of them and raising the standard of the Indian character. Some of them held respectable situations, having been well grounded in holy scriptures, which was the basis of the instruction of the pupils," and, according to Christie, should be in every establishment set on foot for the welfare and improvement of the Indians. "The chief obstacle the school at Chateauguay had to encounter was the continual and secret opposition of the Romish priests, more especially the one who was at Caughnawaga." Major Christie was rather nettled at their interference. He found it passing strange that clergymen "who were receiving salaries from the Government should thwart instead of promote its benevolent views in favour of the untutored aborigines."



and he greatly lamented the fact that the Government had so long delayed in carrying out the intentions of General Amherst of nominating Protestant chaplains to superintend the education of the Indian population. "Had this been done soon after the Conquest," he declared, "we might long since have seen a large number of sober, industrious, civilized and Christian Indians in this part of the Province, instead of drunken, heathen barbarians who now disgrace the country."<sup>1</sup>

It would be well perhaps to attribute this splenetic outburst to the prejudices that were rampant at that time and pass it by unheeded. Even though Article 40 of the terms of capitulation, granted by Amherst at the Conquest, stated that "the Indians shall have freedom of religion and shall keep their missionaries," the officials of the Indian Department, in direct violation of this stipulation, were carrying out as well as they could the instructions given to Governor Carleton, in 1775, that "all missionaries among the Indians, whether established under the authority of or appointed by the Jesuits, or any other ecclesiastical authority of the Romish church, be withdrawn by degrees, and at such times and in such manner as shall be satisfactory to the Indians and consistent with the public safety, and Protestant missionaries appointed in their places."<sup>2</sup> And yet the Indians of Caughnawaga might have reproached Christie

1. Canadian Archives. Indian Correspondence, *passim*.

2. Canadian Archives: *Documents relating to the Constitutional History of Canada*. 1759-1791, 1918, p. 605.

and his agents with as much reason as their old chief Sagronwadie had reproached the officials at Albany in 1700, when he accused them of neglecting their spiritual interests which the French had all along been fostering.

The report of the Executive Council on Indian Affairs sent to the colonial secretary in July, 1837, deplored the little that was being done for the education of the Indians and contrasted the supineness of the English with the activity of the Jesuits during the French *régime*.

"Before the Conquest," the report informs us, "the Indians were under the special care and direction of the Jesuit missionaries who had collected some of the tribe into cantons which still exist, obtaining grants of land for them from the French Crown to be applied to their education and civilization, and became themselves their instructors in so much of the knowledge and arts of living as they thought it advisable to impart to them. But since the cession of the Province to Great Britain, when the Crown succeeded to the position which the Jesuits had formerly occupied in respect to the Indians, no advance has been made; indeed ground has been lost in the Indians' education. Believing it, however, to be incumbent on the State to prepare the younger generation of Indians for another and more useful mode of living, the committee would earnestly impress upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity of establishing and maintaining schools among them in which the rudiments of education shall be taught, joined,

if possible, with instruction in Scripture for some of them; and in order to promote these objects it is submitted that some of the presents and ornaments now given as presents might be reserved and hereafter converted into prizes for proficiency in learning and for industry and success in agriculture; for in natural capacity and faculty of observation the Indians do not yield to any race of men, perhaps even surpass some of them in these respects. A considerable time must probably elapse before habits and prejudices can be so far broken through that they will be sensible of the benefits of such training for their children. It may be necessary, therefore, to make it a condition of the continuing to receive presents, either for themselves or their families, that they should send their children to such schools, and it may be hoped that the clergy will lend their aid in recommending and enforcing the measure as a necessary part of the plan of assimilating the Indians as much as possible to the race of the inhabitants of the Province."

In other words, it was proposed by the Executive Committee to use the presents provided by the bountiful Queen of England for the purpose of forcing the children of the Indians into schools where their traditional faith would be endangered. Proselytism could not go much further. The new "habits and prejudices" desired by the officials were not, in Marcoux's opinion, what was best for his Indians, and he combated the scheme with

much energy. In this he was upheld by the enlightened policy of Lord Gosford.

The firm attitude assumed in the accomplishment of his duties brought the Caughnawaga missionary into conflict more than once with the local officials of the Indian Department. One of these, Superintendent James Hughes, was noted for the violence of his opposition to the devoted pastor, and accused him, without proofs therefor, of being responsible for the disorganized state of the village in those years. Hughes had no doubt whatever that Marcoux was a most improper person to be permitted to remain in an Indian village. With a sorry exhibition of malice and ill-temper, he asserted, in his report of 1840, that the behaviour of the missionary, during the troubles of 1837-38, was such as to demand a strict enquiry.<sup>1</sup> He considered that it was a providential thing that Marcoux and his flock were at loggerheads during the rebellion; otherwise the affair of November 4, 1838, when the patriots contemplated an attack on the village of Caughnawaga, might not have turned out as it did; for, instead of the French, Canadian rebels being signally defeated, disarmed, and seventy-five of them made prisoners, they might have taken the village, and through the reiterated advice and prayers of the missionary, the Indians might have given up their arms and ammunition, they might have remained neutral,

1. The missionary at Caughnawaga was accused of *i*) urging the Indians to release the patriot prisoners; *ii*) that he urged the Indians to disarm; and *iii*) that in his instruction he endeavoured to destroy their patriotic spirit.—*Letter of Mgr. Bourget to M. Marcoux.*



or perhaps they might have been prevailed on to do worse.<sup>1</sup>

This was another form of prejudice aimed at the worthy missionary, and aimed in a way most apt to turn the civil authorities against him. When Superintendent Hughes issued his report in 1840, Marcoux had been living in Caughnawaga for twenty-one years, and he undoubtedly knew his flock better than the local government officials, who were being constantly changed. Hughes erred greatly when he wrote in the same report that Marcoux was making an effort to regain the friendship of his Indians by promising them to get back the strip of land which they claimed had been taken from them and added to the seigniorie of Laprairie. Twenty years previously, Marcoux knew that any such issue was a forlorn hope. He wrote in this strain, in 1820, to Bishop Plessis, and again, in 1829, to Bishop Panet, when he urged those prelates to intercede with Lord Dalhousie and Lord Aylmer for his Indians. He blamed the government officials and their system of ruling, for the disorders which were creeping into the mission. The fact that the Indians were minors in the eyes of the law prevented them from pleading except through their tutor, who was the King of England. In 1820, over a thousand pounds were due them from various sources, which they could not collect through legal channels, owing to their inability to sue their debtors. The result of these

1. Hughes to the Secretary of Ind. Affairs, Quebec. (Letter from Montreal dated July 17, 1840. Canadian Archives.)

conditions was that the roads on their seigniorly were in a wretched state, their sick and aged were neglected, and shiftlessness and poverty had begun to get the upper hand.

In 1820, Marcoux had secured for his Indians the renewal of an annuity of \$266, a sum which had been received yearly from Albany since 1796, for the sale of lands in the State of New York, and which had remained unpaid after the troubles of 1812-1815.<sup>1</sup> But this and similar services, in years past, counted for little with his enemies. Superintendent Hughes continued to lay the blame on him for the impoverished state of the village, and used his alleged unpatriotic attitude during the fray with the Chateauguay rebels in November, 1838, to bring things to a head. A commission of eight, three of whom were Napier, secretary of the Indian Department, Solomon Chesley of St. Regis as interpreter, and Hughes himself as star witness, began an enquiry into his conduct in July, 1840.

Sir John Colborne had already absolved the Caughnawaga missionary of any lack of loyalty in the affair of 1838, for on November 3, of that year, a fortnight after the seizure of the patriots at Caughnawaga, Thomas Goldie, Colborne's civil secretary, wrote: "With respect to the conduct of Mr. Marcoux, His Excellency has no doubt but that he can be depended on." But there were other matters which might be harped upon, and the so-called commission undertook to do the disagreeable

1. This rent was commuted in 1848, part from the amount going to the upkeep of the church.—*Rapport des Commissaires spéciaux, 1856*, pp. 19-20.

work. Half a dozen disgruntled Indians testified against their pastor. The gist of their evidence, soon to be refuted by other Indians, was that he was too harsh in his sermons, that he accused his flock of being too worldly, that he was mixed up too much with the temporal affairs of the village, and that his influence over the chiefs hindered the reforms projected by the Department for the better administration of the seigniory. After this testimony was taken, Napier and Chesley endeavoured to shut off all evidence in rebuttal, and so flagrant was the manifestation of their hostility and partiality that one of the commissioners, Reverend M. Manseau, vicar-general of Montreal, had to appeal openly to their sense of justice and British fair play. Happily, they did not succeed in gagging other Indian witnesses, who testified that the chiefs of the village and the great majority of the warriors were fully opposed to the new-fangled reforms and the innovations suggested by the Indian Department which, if adopted, would overturn the hereditary laws and customs of the Iroquois tribe and rob them of the faith they had received from their ancestors. Judging from the reports still extant, the Marcoux commission of 1840 was a travesty of justice. However, the missionary came out of the ordeal unscathed, and the changes outlined by the self-appointed friends of the Indians of Caughnawaga did not take place.

While conditions had changed for the better, in 1840, there was still room for improvement, but it was unfair to saddle the blame for deficiencies

on one who was devoting all his energies to the welfare of his flock. Following up the sound advice given by Sir George Murray in 1830, Marcoux had always urged the tillage of the soil, although he had honest doubts as to any success in that direction. Writing in 1836, he asserted that his Indians had practically ceased to live by the hunt, but that they had a marked aversion to farming, preferring to earn their livelihood by piloting boats and rafts down the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa in summer, and in winter by the sale of moccasins, snowshoes and beadwork. Sedentary life was oppressive to the Caughnawaga Indians in the nineteenth century.

"Don't tie them down to learn a trade," exclaimed their missionary. "Touch not their liberty if you wish to do anything with them. Farming might do, but they must be encouraged by furnishing them implements. Up to the present they cultivate with the spade and not with the plough." But Marcoux was not too optimistic; he was very well aware that farming was a slow game for them. Out of twenty-eight thousand two hundred acres which their ancestors owed to the bounty of Louis XIV, all but twelve thousand four hundred had been alienated in 1843, and of this acreage ten thousand were still in a primitive state. In other words, although the Indians of Caughnawaga were free to till as much as they thought proper, they had under cultivation, after a hundred and sixty years, only a fraction over two thousand acres.



Few families tilled more than thirty or forty acres each; the average tilled only ten.

In his report of 1843, Father Marcoux gives some interesting details about the life of a Caughnawaga farmer. He tells us that "generally speaking, the Indian begins the day by eating between eight and nine o'clock. When the sun begins to throw out its rays he goes to his field, where he works in the greatest heat until the afternoon. He then returns home to take another meal. In winter between the morning and the afternoon meals, he goes to cut wood, but when he remains at home he eats several times a day. No word is found in his tongue for *dinner*, *breakfast* or *supper*; he always uses the expression *to eat*. The Indian has no stated number of meals, nor any fixed time for taking them; it all depends on circumstances." Indian traits had changed little in two centuries, and in the mind of the man who had studied them and knew them best, little hope was entertained that any radical change would ever be effected.

## CHAPTER X

### The Last Fifty Years

1850-1900

*The New Church—Appeals to European Royalty for Help—Caughnawaga a Railway Terminus—Dissatisfaction among the Indians—Marcoux's Failing Health—Arrival of the Oblates—Death of Father Marcoux—Indians go to Europe—Distinguished Visitors in the Village—Indian Boatmen in Egypt. Monument raised to Kateri Tekakwitha—Arrival of Father Forbes—His Work among the Registers. Return of the Jesuits.*

MARCOUX was following the fortunes of his Indians closely, and while engaged in the rather thankless task of bettering their social and physical conditions, the energetic shepherd did not forget their spiritual interests. At his invitation Monsignor Forbin-Janson, the distinguished Bishop of Nancy, during his visit to Canada in 1839-41, visited Caughnawaga, and in his discourses to the Indians gave an impetus to the practice of temperance, a virtue in which a noted laxity had been remarked in recent years.

Marcoux often reminded his flock of Kateri Tekakwitha, the maiden whose virtues had shed such lustre on their mission, at the end of the seventeenth century. It was she more than anyone else

who had kept the name of Sault Saint Louis, or Caughnawaga, before the world. Cholenec's sketch of her life, published in 1717 in the *Lettres Edifiantes*,<sup>1</sup> and the entire chapter dedicated to her by the historian Charlevoix in his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*,<sup>2</sup> published in 1744, had kept her fame undimmed in Europe during the eighteenth century. After his return from America in 1794, Chateaubriand glorified her memory in his volume *Les Natchez*, coupling her name with St. Geneviève of France, and proclaiming her the protectress of the French race in America. A lofty cross had always stood at Kahnawaké, at the foot of the Lachine rapids, on the spot where Kateri was buried in 1680, and was renewed from time to time when it was on the point of falling. In July, 1843, the raising of a new cross over her grave was made the occasion of a demonstration in her honour, when a large number of French and Indians echoed the praises of her who, a hundred and sixty years before, had yielded up her soul to its Maker in the odour of holiness.

The chief worry of the Caughnawaga pastor in those years was the critical condition of the mission church, whose walls, after an existence of one hundred and twenty years, had begun to show signs of dilapidation. In 1801, the tower had been strengthened and the steeple raised twenty feet, the chiefs of the village undertaking to construct the cross which would crown its summit. During

1. Douzième lettre: LE CLERC, Paris, 1717.

2. Vol. I, pp. 572-587.

his visit in 1824, the Bishop of Montreal, having been convinced that the edifice was too small for the growing population, gave permission to alter the interior and thereby augment the seating capacity. The two hundred and fifty pounds granted by Lord Goderich, in 1830, had helped to make additions to the vestry, while a chapel dedicated to the Holy Family was completed two years later.

But alterations and repairs were merely putting off the inevitable; something more radical and more elaborate was needed. The energetic Marcoux realized that the time had come to build anew on plans generous enough to meet the demands of his flock for years to come. Fearing the ambitious scheme he had in mind would fail to elicit practical co-operation in Canada, he resolved to try his fortune in Old France. He had met with success there some years previously. A passage in the diary of Count Rudolph Apponyi, a Hungarian diplomat, living in Paris, in 1826, reveals the origin of the three oil paintings of St. Louis, the Virgin Mary, and St. Francis Xavier, which are still hanging in the church at Caughnawaga. "There is here in Paris," he wrote on March 21, "an Iroquois chief who has come from his country to see France, but is without money to enable him to return. Not knowing what to do, he has begged the King of France to give him the necessary funds and also two paintings for the church he is building at home."



Knowing the eagerness of Father Marcoux for the welfare of his church and mission and the clever tactics he usually employed in promoting such welfare, it is safe to conclude that he had something to do with the Indian chief's visit to Paris in 1826. The coronation of Charles X was to take place at Rheims in that year. Were the newly-crowned king, after his return to Paris, to meet among his well-wishers on that occasion, an American Indian, a descendant of the famous Iroquois tribe, his sympathetic interest would undoubtedly be aroused and something worth while might result for the benefit of an ancient ally of France. Marcoux was not disappointed. Instead of the two paintings asked for, Charles X presented Caughnawaga with three of large dimensions.

In 1836, the missionary returned to the charge by writing a tactful letter to Marie-Amelie, wife of King Louis-Philippe, for the purpose of placing before the royal lady his plans and his desire for their accomplishment. He informed her that during the twenty-five years he had lived among the Iroquois he had become as familiar with their language as with his own, and in all that time he had shared their poverty and laboured for their welfare. How happy he would be if in dying, he could leave them as a legacy of his missionary labours a suitable church, one which would last long, and would attach them more and more to the religion which, after God, they owed to France! In the name of the whole Iroquois nation, a poor Indian missionary, who had no pretensions in this



VIEW OF THE VILLAGE OF CAUGHNAWAGA—Taken from the church steeple



world, dared to lay his appeal at the feet of Her Most Christian Majesty, conjointly with her royal spouse, asking her to help him, after the example of the queens and princesses who had preceded her in the lofty position to which Divine Providence had been pleased to raise her. Her name would be immortalized thereby, for it would be graven in the hearts of the pioneer Christians of Canada. A thousand francs came to the Caughnawaga mission as a result of this petition.

Six years later, hoping for a similar windfall, he sent another missive, not to Queen Amelie, but to Louis-Philippe himself, accompanied by specimens of beadwork and miniature bark canoes. This time Marcoux did not write in his own name; he was merely the interpreter of the sentiments of the chiefs who recalled the years when they were the beloved children of France.

"Although we love the Government under which we live," the Caughnawaga chiefs were made to say, "we have not forgotten the great Ononthio who was so kind to us in olden times. It was he who drew us from our woods and forests to form us into men and Christians, and we are happy to recall this epoch in our history. It was with a deep sense of gratitude that we received the gift of money which was kindly sent us. We have placed it in reserve until it pleases Providence to complete the sum required for the reconstruction of the church which was the work of your predecessors. Desiring to show our gratitude otherwise than by mere words to yourself and your



illustrious queen, *l'ange tutélaire de la France*, we take the liberty of sending you a few specimens of our Indian workmanship; the best we have, because we are poor. We ask you to accept these little objects for yourself and your beloved family. They may at least provide a moment's amusement."

Another thousand francs came from the royal purse to swell the missionary's budget. And with minor sums reaching him from various sources, he resolved to begin the building of his church from the plans prepared by the Jesuit Father Felix Martin. In seven months the work had progressed so far that the roof was on; nothing further remained to be done but to cover it with tin.

The success of his appeals to France in 1836 and 1842 urged Father Marcoux to write again to Louis-Philippe—this time not for money but for altar equipment for his new church. He had some doubts about the opportuneness of a third appeal, for in a letter written to a Canadian Oblate, Father Léonard Baveux, who was then in France and who was interested in his success, he remarked, "Louis-Philippe has by this time seen and read our third address. We must stop with this one, for he may think us unwise to be always knocking at a door where it is forbidden to shake hands. I informed my Indians of your interview, and they whose horizons are usually so limited were proud to learn that their names had been heralded so far. I expect nothing more from the King of France, and as I have still seven or eight thousand francs to pay, I have written to the Propagation of the

Faith, asking them for an alms for the church we are building in the chief village of the Iroquois."

Marcoux was correct in his surmise; Louis-Philippe had forwarded his last cheque to Caughnawaga. The Revolution of 1848 had deprived him of his throne and sent him into exile. There were, however, other sources still untapped. The missionary's success with the royalty in France encouraged him to make a similar venture in England. In February, 1845, he wrote a letter for his chiefs to Queen Victoria, basing his appeal on their hereditary loyalty and on the promises made to their envoys by Sir George Murray in 1830. As we saw in a preceding chapter, Captain Piper, Sir James Kempt's engineer, had estimated that £1,023 would meet the needs of Caughnawaga, a sum which had already been refused as being too large, with little hope held out for reconsideration. The gift of £250 had been received and spent. Nothing more might be expected, but according to Indian logic there remained a balance of £773 which they would like to have in hand. A disappointing answer came to the appeal to the Queen of England; but Marcoux evidently succeeded in setting the wheels in motion in Downing Street. A note from the governor-general informed the chiefs at Caughnawaga that the secretary of State in England did not feel at liberty to present their petition to the queen. They should know that the amount of £250, mentioned in the despatch of Lord Ripon to Lord Aylmer in December, 1830, sufficiently denoted the extent of the aid which,

it was intended, should be given to the Indians for their church, and Lord Stanley regretted that "they should be led to form any erroneous impression on the subject." It would seem that the news of this official refusal had not reached their village, or else its contents were not satisfactory to the missionary, for a second despatch, apparently an answer to a new appeal, came three months later from Downing Street, announcing that it was the wish of Mr. Gladstone that Mr. Marcoux should be informed of the tenor of Lord Stanley's reply, and that steps should be taken to apprise the Indians of the decision not to help.

Notwithstanding the time thus taken up with crowned heads and statesmen, the pastor of Caughnawaga kept an eye on local conditions, which in those years were far from satisfactory. The vice of drunkenness was still prevalent, with its consequences in sin and poverty very evident throughout the village. But coincident with the completion of the church he had to record a marked improvement in the habits of his flock. Writing to his Oblate friend in France, in a letter dated January 31, 1847, he remarked:

"I finished today the visitation of my village, which I began the day after New Year's. Every day and all the days I begged not for money, as heretofore, but for souls. I preached in every home to all ages and to all conditions. I am satisfied; promises have been given, but I am waiting for results. I hear many a *sakatatrewaté*

and *niawen*<sup>1</sup> when quitting each house. Cleanliness everywhere because they were expecting me.... I must tell you that I gave them a bad scare when I told them from the pulpit that cholera was raging in the country where it raged in 1831, just a year before it carried off a seventh of our village, and that it might well visit us again next spring. No one wants to get married now, or to build; for we shall all die this year! All unknown to me, our young men have formed a society and have taken St. John Baptist for their patron. They have given up liquor and other amusements. I hope that they will grow in numbers, thanks to the cholera which is raging in Persia! It is a long call from Persia to Caughnawaga, but in order not to pass for a false prophet, like Jonas, I made them understand that God can still spare the Ninevites if they do penance. If the cholera does not come this spring I will put it off till next spring, to gain a year and thus strengthen those who are trying to improve.”<sup>2</sup>

Evidently the young men had persevered in their good resolutions, for, in the following year, on his departure for Rome, the Bishop of Montreal wrote to Marcoux to say that he was greatly edified by the reports which he had received about his dusky flock. “They make us white people ashamed of ourselves,” wrote the prelate, who, in the same letter, promised to lay at the feet of the Sovereign Pontiff the address in which the village proposed

1. “*I repent*” and “*I thank you*” (Bishop Forbes).

2. Caughnawaga Archives, *passim*.



to express their sympathy with His Holiness who was a victim of the revolution which was then sweeping over Italy.

The exemplary conduct of the Indians was due in part to the seclusion of the village, for up to the middle of the century, Caughnawaga was out of the beaten track. Strangers were rarely seen, and the native population were far enough away from the contaminating crowd to enable them to live their lives in peace and quiet. The biographer of Eleazar Williams gives us a pen-picture of the village at that time. "It consists of two long, narrow streets," he writes, "varying considerably in width. The houses are low and shabby, most of them of wood, but some of dark stone. The masonry is of the rudest kind. A Roman Catholic church is a solid stone building, with some slight pretence to architecture. In looking at the dingy houses, the narrow streets, the crowds of little Indian children, and considering the loneliness of the spot, one cannot help feeling how secure a hiding place for a poor scion of royalty the village presented." <sup>1</sup>

But Caughnawaga was soon forced out of its primitive isolation. In the fifth decade of the nineteenth century it had become a bustling railway terminus, and the Indians were obliged to mingle with hundreds of strangers who were not as scrupulous as certain standards called for in their dealings with red men. Eight years were to elapse before the Victoria tubular bridge, whose construction was then under contemplation, would span

1. HANSON: *The Lost Prince*, p. 355.

the St. Lawrence, a few miles nearer Montreal, and provide a new and permanent route for traffic. Meanwhile the Indian village above the rapids was chosen as a favourable spot for the landing of passengers and freight to and from the United States.

In addition to the short line which had been in operation from Laprairie to St. John since 1836, another known as the Lake St. Louis and Province Line Railway, thirty-five miles long, was opened in August, 1852. It ran from Caughnawaga in a southeasterly direction and connected with American lines at Mooer's Junction, in New York State. A ferry service carried passengers and freight across the river between the Indian village and the Lachine wharf, which, in 1847, had been linked up with Montreal by a line eight miles long. In the summer months traffic was carried on without much difficulty, but contemporary reports state that in the autumn and during the break-up of the river in the springtime, wind and ice frequently put the ferry-boat out of commission for several days at a time. Marcoux tells us that his house often had to harbour strangers in the village and that his outbuildings were filled with horses.

The passage of a railway line through the reserve was the occasion of much bickering between the builders and the Indians, who were jealous of their seigniorial rights. The disposal of the money received from the company for the sale of the right of way was the first difficulty that presented itself, and became the topic of several letters to the

Government. The missionary wrote to the superintendent-general of the Indian Department, asking that a sum be set apart for the church, which was burdened with debt, but he was informed that the money accruing from the sale of Indian lands could not be devoted for such purposes. The chiefs in their turn asked that the money be handed over to their own agents and not to the Department. This request was also refused on the ground that the "present generation have no right to deprive their descendants of any part of the seigniority itself."

Unsatisfactory answers of this character, together with the confusion and damage caused to farmers along the line, aroused the anger of the Indians, and when the line was completed through the reserve they refused to have any further dealings with the company. What seemed a last straw was a demand for thirteen acres for terminal purposes along the water-front within the village limits. Already suspicious and ill-disposed, they saw in this demand a deep-laid plot to get possession of their village, and the chiefs who were responsible for the sales already effected began to feel the resentment of their tribesmen. Threats of bloodshed were hurled about, and the situation had become so acute that it required the intervention of Lord Elgin to soothe their wounded feelings. They yielded with doubtful grace when they were informed that "no one, whether white man or Indian, is permitted to stand in the way of improve-

ments when fair compensation is offered for the property."

The Indians were warned that the railway company had acted throughout with fairness and liberality, that the land was needed by the company, and that neither their own interests nor those of the public should be sacrificed to narrow or prejudiced views. The effervescence, which at one time threatened to disrupt the peace of the village, gradually cooled down, but one may attribute to the incident herein related a movement which began to show itself at the time. A number of families in Caughnawaga entered into correspondence with the Saugeen tribe and expressed a willingness to go and settle on the shore of Lake Huron. The Indian Department appeared to view this migration with favour and suggested Colpoy's Bay, or, better still, Wikwemikong, on Manitoulin Island, where they would find a resident agent, a surgeon, a church and missionaries of their own persuasion. However, the exodus from Caughnawaga did not amount to much in the end. About twenty families quitted the reserve for Lake Huron, and all but three, according to the testimony of Marcoux's successor, returned before 1857.

Marcoux himself had been leading a strenuous life for over thirty years among his Indians, and failing health warned him that he would soon have to provide for a successor. As early as 1828, Bishop Lartigue had asked him to encourage two young ecclesiastics to go to live with him and learn the Iroquois tongue. This was in prudent provision for



the future, but the missionary was still young and vigorous, and he saw no reason then to exercise his zeal in the quest for a successor. Devoted to his Indians and their interests, he continued on among them for twenty-two years longer, living a poor and austere life, confident that Providence would send a man to take his place when the time came to hand over the reins.

In the autumn of 1850 he had to spend several weeks in the Hotel Dieu of Montreal, whither the practical sympathy of Bishop Bourget followed him to the extent of meeting all his doctor's bills. "I have paid all you owed at the Hotel Dieu and to Dr. Munro," the kind-hearted prelate wrote on November 15th; "may I also have the privilege of paying Dr. Bruneau?" Marcoux had evidently consulted him about a successor, and that there was question of the Jesuits going back to their ancient mission we gather from a letter, written by the bishop to the Indian missionary. "Don't you think," he asked, "that St. Francis Xavier would like to see his brethren back at their mission of the Sault? And will not St. Francis Regis wish to see the same thing some day? I believe he will—and so do you!"

Other counsels prevailed, however, for a few days later he received another note from the Bishop of Montreal: "I am well pleased to tell you, what perhaps you already know, that you are going to have an Oblate Father as pupil and companion." If not already known, this news was undoubtedly welcome to the Caughnawaga missionary, for his

friendship was sincere for the Oblate Congregation whose members had already begun their wonderful apostolate in Canada. "If Monsignor de Mazenod, your superior general," he wrote to his Oblate friend in France, "would send me in exchange for my profound respect and my good wishes for the founder and his Order, a blessing that would give me an Oblate's zeal for souls, I would keep it *repositam in sinu meo*."

Four years previously, in 1846, the same Oblate, Father Léonard, prompted by Marcoux, had carried a petition to the clergy of France from the Caughnawaga chiefs praying that missionaries in large numbers should come to evangelize their brethren in Canada. "You will find here children docile to your voice," they wrote. "Your words will penetrate to the hearts of our fellow-Indians, as water penetrates the earth parched by the sun. Your coming among them will give them great joy, and they will cry out: 'Let us draw the bow to slay the moose and the cariboo; let us seize the club to kill the beaver; let us throw out the line to catch the fish that will feed the black-robés'. Know, however, that we do not ask for ourselves. For the past two hundred years we have always had those who taught us to pray; but our brethren in the Northern forests have not the happiness that we enjoy. Come, young black-robés, you who dwell in the land of the Great Ononthio, and bring the light of faith to our brethren in the thick darkness of infidelity."

The invitation was heeded. Oblate missionaries began to arrive every year; but at the end of February, 1851, the one who had been promised to Father Marcoux had not yet appeared at Caughnawaga; he was still in France. "No news yet from your coadjutor *cum futura successione*," wrote Bishop Bourget. "I can easily forgive him for not wishing to put out to sea too soon."

Towards the close of the same year Marcoux welcomed Father Eugene Antoine, O. M. I., as a companion to his lonely life in the village; but four years were to elapse before the Oblate inherited the responsibilities of the pastorate at Caughnawaga. During that period he remained under the tutorship of Father Marcoux, studying the character of the Iroquois and learning their language, meanwhile having continually before him the example of a man who, in spite of his failing health and thirty years of Indian ministry, was working with the energy of youth. One example will serve to illustrate. Marcoux had never been satisfied with the result of his appeal to Louis-Philippe in 1847. The Revolution of the following year, which drove the King of France from the throne, had shattered the missionary's hopes of ever getting all he had asked for for his church, and he resolved to appeal again as soon as the moment seemed favourable.

In 1852, the chiefs of Caughnawaga and their pastor sent an address to Napoleon, President of the French Republic. "As soon as we learned," they wrote, "that you had been chosen from among thirty million men to be the Great Chief

of the French, of whom we were formerly the faithful allies and children, we felt prompted to send our words to the nephew of a great man, the greatest of all men. Seeing in your elevation a disposal of the Master of Life, who wishes to keep alive a name which should not die, we decided in a general council to put our sentiments into words and send them to you beyond the great salt ocean. We offer you our congratulations, then, for having gained the good will of all the French, who wish to live under the prestige of your name as under a protecting shield, and we congratulate the French people for having made so good a choice and rendered justice to your family so long smitten by misfortune." After having wished Napoleon III a long life and a happy reign, Marcoux and his Iroquois chiefs suddenly became practical. "As the events of recent years have disappointed our hopes and as we can no longer count on the promises made to us by him who was before you the King of the French, we turn now to you. Since the Master of Life has deposed him and set you in his place, will you permit us to say that it is for you to fulfil the engagements of your predecessor—not surely as something which is due us, but rather to give you the occasion to begin your reign by an act of good will towards a nation which was formerly rich but which has been despoiled of all its estates by white men? We shall pray for our great benefactor in order that the Master of Life may guide him in the way of righteousness."



The address was accompanied by a note from Marcoux himself, giving in detail the chief need of his mission, namely, a complete set of vestments, suitable for festive occasions—made of cloth of gold, if possible, with red trimmings, as his Indians were fond of colours. The result of the appeal was a superb cope in cloth of gold, with a costly chalice, a gift from the Empress Eugenie, on which was inscribed *Don de l'Impératrice*. A note of thanks, accompanied by samples of Indian handiwork<sup>1</sup> was promptly sent for these gifts. "We have received the gifts with all possible gratitude," wrote Marcoux. "They are all the more precious to us seeing that they come from royal hands. They made the Indians open their eyes wide, for they are not accustomed to see such beautiful things."

Marcoux was not yet quite satisfied; he had asked for a complete set of vestments and only a cope had arrived; the chasuble and dalmatics were still wanting. The Emperor of France had forgotten something. Marcoux accordingly wrote to the royal chaplain, who, he learned, had his affair in hand: "A chalice has come. While we did not ask for it, because we have an old one, the gift of Louis XIV, I am convinced that Her Imperial Majesty could only have intended it to accompany

1. The objects sent to Prince Napoleon III by the Caughnawaga Indians were: *i*) Specimens of maple sugar; *ii*) a prayer book in the Iroquois language; *iii*) a small bark canoe; *iv*) a pair of scarlet slippers; *v*) a deer-skin watch-fob; *vi*) two spectacle cases; *vii*) two pocket books; *viii*) baskets, screens, flower pots, and cigar-holders in birch bark. Most of these articles were beautifully decorated with fur and porcupine quills, and well illustrated the skill of the workers in the village.—*Caughnawaga Archives*.

a set of beautiful vestments. This gift from her hand should not prevent us from receiving what her royal spouse had intended to send us." Perseverance crowned his efforts. The rest of the vestments came in due time and Marcoux in another letter made his Indians exclaim: "Long life to the Emperor!"

A much more serious affair than thanking royalty for gifts kept the minds of the Caughnawaga Indians excited during the summer months of 1852. The stipulation of the treaty of Ghent assured them of an annuity from the State of New York for the lands lying south of the international boundary line which belonged to them up to 1796, and which, shortly after his arrival, as we have seen, Marcoux had succeeded in getting regularly paid to them. A similar claim was advanced against the State of Vermont for lands lying east of Lake Champlain, and in 1852, the minister, Eleazar Williams,<sup>1</sup> endeavoured to secure an appointment as agent for St. Regis and Caughnawaga to transact this business with the Government of that State.

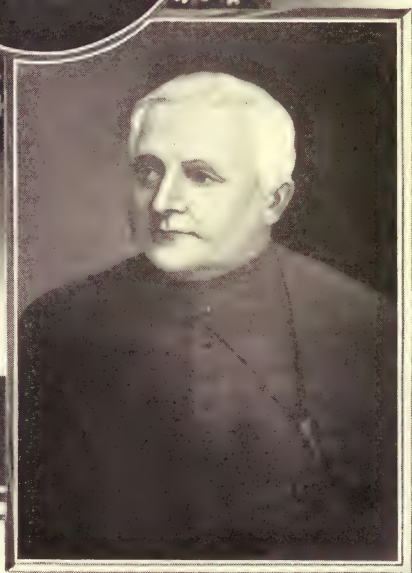
His action was vehemently repudiated by the chiefs of Caughnawaga, and two members of the De Lorimier family, with Chief Pierre Thawenrate, were appointed in his stead. The success of their mission in Vermont would have meant an additional revenue to the coffers of the village, and as usual, when their material interests were concerned, Indian enthusiasm had reached a high pitch; they were confident that their claim would be recognized.

1. Cf. *antea*, pp. 323-327.

But the envoys learned that the subject had already been carefully examined by the legislature of Vermont, and the governor of the State was requested to inform them that the authorities were of opinion that the claim of the Caughnawagas, if it ever existed, had ceased to exist in consequence of the treaties of 1763 and 1783. When the Indians learned that they had no claim either in equity or justice to an annuity or to any land in Vermont, they dismissed the matter as not worthy of further consideration.

It was only three years later that the even tenor of their lives was interrupted, when a great sorrow suddenly overwhelmed them. In the month of May, 1855, an attack of typhoid fever carried off their missionary. For thirty-seven years Father Marcoux had been their counsellor, advocate and protector. He had been a true leader of his flock, chiding them, using the rod when occasion demanded, espousing their temporal interests always and everywhere, loving them with the tender affection of a father, and above all, as the pastor of their souls, pointing out to them the way to heaven, and instructing them in the only things that matter here below.

Little wonder that the Indians of Caughnawaga have treasured up happy memories of this faithful pastor, whose body rests under the village church which he built in 1845, and which, as we have seen, cost him so much labour and worry. Father Marcoux was a man of remarkable talents; his writings reveal distinct literary gifts. He possessed



REV. EUGENE ANTOINE, O. M. I.

REV. NICHOLAS BURTIN, O. M. I.





a thorough knowledge of the Indian tongue and left behind him an Iroquois grammar and a dictionary in the same language. Several times he endeavoured to have both volumes printed, but his own poverty and the lack of interest shown by the Indian Department, notwithstanding repeated appeals for pecuniary aid, had prevented him from carrying out a design which would have rendered less arduous the work of those who were to come after him.<sup>1</sup>

Marcoux's successor, however, was not handicapped by insufficient training. He had lived four years under a competent teacher and had inherited the spiritual leadership of Caughnawaga only after he had made a thorough study of life and character among his flock. In his first report to the Department, Father Antoine displayed a knowledge which showed that he had been a docile and attentive pupil. "The Indians have no aptitude for the mechanical arts," he declared. "They take no pains to learn trades, although they are known as good navigators. What keeps them poor is their natural apathy. Their long intercourse with the whites has done for them all that can be hoped for in the way of social and intellectual progress. Their spirit of nationality, their love of their language, which they cling to as to their lives, their lack of perseverance in the acquirement

1. Joseph Marcoux was born in Quebec, March 16, 1791. He studied in the seminary of that city and was ordained on June 12, 1813. He spent six years at the St. Regis mission and was transferred to Caughnawaga in 1819 by Bishop Plessis: (TANGUAY: *Dict. General*, Vol. V, p. 507; *Repertoire du Clerge*, p. 160.) When he was affiliated to the tribe he received the name, *T'haron-Miakanere*, which means: He looks up to heaven.

of a certain standard of education, common among the whites—all these things keep them back in civilization.”<sup>1</sup>

And yet the Caughnawaga Indians, if backward in the finer social and intellectual attainments, were useful citizens. In those years they were guiding down the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa the vast rafts of timber which, in the middle of the nineteenth century, were the chief sources of Canadian wealth. Their brawn and muscle were eagerly sought by the builders of the Victoria bridge, where hundreds of them were developing those qualities of skill and reckless daring which, in after years, they were to display in works of all kinds requiring the use of structural steel. When this great bridge, then one of the world's wonders, was completed, in 1859, it was immediately used for traffic, but it was not formally opened until the following year, when the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, crossed the Atlantic to drive the last bolt into its iron flanks.

The presence of the future King of England gave the Caughnawagas an opportunity of showing their skill with oar and paddle. In August, 1860, Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, had arranged a reception for the young prince at his residence near Dorval, with the Indians as one of the chief attractions. Seventy-six warriors hailing from the village across the water, in feathers, scarlet cloth and war-paint, and

1. Father Antoine to R. T. Pennefather, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Toronto, February 27, 1857.

manning nine huge birch canoes, mingled with the *voyageurs* of the famous fur company in evolutionary manœuvres before the eyes of royalty. When the barge carrying the prince and his suite pushed off from Lachine, the flotilla of canoes darted out abreast to meet it, keeping time to the cadence of a boatman's song. The line opened in the middle, as if to let the royal barge pass, but suddenly wheeling around formed abreast again, with the prince in the centre, and thus proceeded to the landing-place at Dorval. Towards evening, Sir George Simpson, an expert with canoe and paddle, directed the Indians and *voyageurs* in the execution of another series of movements on the water. Then the flotilla carrying the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Lyons, the Earl of Mulgrave, General Bruce, and the rest of the distinguished visitors, crossed over Lake St. Louis to Caughnawaga, and after passing along the entire length of the village bank, where the Indian population were lined up to cheer the royal procession, returned to Lachine. The day's spectacle was impressive enough to merit an illustration in the *London Illustrated News*, published in 1860.

Old France was also to renew relations with the descendants of its ancient wards. The Christian Iroquois had always kept a tender memory for the land to which their forefathers owed allegiance, and welcomed any occasion to renew the ties which remained broken since the visit of Monsignor Forbin-Janson, a score of years before. In 1861 Monsieur E. Rameau de Saint-Père, author of



several works on the French in America, paid a visit to Caughnawaga and was enthusiastically received by Father Antoine and his flock. The stranger noted the poverty of the village and carried back to France impressions which, it was hoped, would be something more than sentimental.

Although nothing came from his suggestion to place Indian wares on the Parisian market, an attempt was made five years later. In 1866, an agent acting for the Canadian Government visited Caughnawaga for the purpose of obtaining specimens of Indian handiwork for the Universal Exposition which was to be held in Paris the following year. Two Indians of the village, lured by the great spectacle, visited the French capital in 1867, and returned well pleased with what they had seen on their journey; but the chronicler writes that they were greatly "scandalized at the way Paris observed Sunday and the laws of fasting." The French city had impressed them by its magnificence, and they asserted that Paris surpassed London as Montreal surpassed Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup>

They were not the only members of the tribe who resolved to see the world. The taste for wandering, inherited by every Iroquois, had evidently grown in the village in those years. In 1868,

1. These visitors were more easily dazzled than their ancestors who visited France just two centuries before. Charlevoix informs us (*Hist.* Vol. III, p. 322) that when several Iroquois chiefs went to Paris in 1666, great care was taken to show them the royal palaces and the other attractions of the city. But they were not impressed, preferring their own villages to the capital of the most flourishing kingdom in Europe. It was not until they were led into the rue de la Huchette, where the Parisian butcher-stalls were located, that their eyes were opened to the glories of France. The display of meats of all kinds aroused their enthusiasm and compensated for their previous disappointments.

fifteen young Indians sailed over the ocean to visit London and other cities, to give exhibitions in dancing and lacrosse, accomplishments in which they were recognized experts. Eight years later, in 1876, another band of thirteen crossed the Atlantic on a similar errand. They exhibited their skill in the presence of enthusiastic thousands, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and before they returned home they had the honour of playing lacrosse in the courtyard of Windsor Castle, with Queen Victoria as an interested spectator. At the end of the game, they read an address to Her Majesty and presented a handsome basket made of birch bark. The queen graciously thanked them for the gift and gave each of the players a signed portrait of herself, and then, to crown a perfect day, regaled them with a sumptuous supper.

Father Antoine's pastorship ended in 1864, when higher responsibilities in his Congregation were thrust upon him.<sup>1</sup> During his nine years of labour among the Iroquois of Caughnawaga, he had been aided at various times by his fellow-Oblates, by the Jesuit, Father Durthaller, and by members of the diocesan clergy, but his constant companion, from 1857, had been the Reverend Nicholas V. Burtin, upon whose shoulders the burden fell when Antoine was withdrawn.

The new missionary assumed his office at a time when the village was passing through a serious

1. Joseph-Eugène Antoine was born in France in 1826. When adopted by the tribe at Caughnawaga he received the name *Tentenhawitha*: he brings the light. After leaving the mission he filled distinguished offices in the Oblate Congregation both in America and Europe. He died in Paris, January 11, 1900.

crisis, for an epidemic of typhoid fever was raging among his Indians; but he was at their service day and night, consoling them, encouraging them, and preparing for the end those for whom there was no longer any hope. Many victims had been carried off before the epidemic could be controlled. When it had entirely disappeared he resolved to renew the pious practice of making annual pilgrimages to the Calvary at Oka, in order that his flock might be spared similar visitations.

High up on the side of one of the lofty hills which gave a name to the Lake of Two Mountains, three crosses were raised on a site which, for many years, was a place of pilgrimage for the tribes living at Oka and Caughnawaga. Pilgrims from Caughnawaga paddled up Lake St. Louis to the end of the Island of Montreal and then crossed over the Lake of Two Mountains, where they were joined by their Ottawa and Algonquin brethren. Together they climbed the hillside yearly and went through their devotions. In the course of years, abuses had crept in, and while awaiting a return of the Indians to better sentiments, the missionaries of Caughnawaga decided to suspend those annual pilgrimages.

The Iroquois are fond of processions and other external demonstrations, and no greater punishment can be inflicted upon them than to be deprived of the privilege of participating. It was in this way the bishop punished them when they were harshly treating Father Marcoux in 1836. He suspended for a year the processions of

Corpus Christi and of the Assumption, and suppressed the bonfire which it was usual to light on the feast of St. John Baptist; he forbade them to sing Midnight Mass at Christmas, and threatened that, if no improvement were marked in their attitude toward their missionary, he would deprive them of High Mass on Sunday.

Evidently a change had taken place for the better when Burtin took the reins and when he resolved to renew the old custom of going to Oka yearly. The Indians respected their pastor who, judging from his own chronicles, had little to complain about or deplore except the spectacle of his people quitting the village in large numbers, for he feared that while they were absent from their homes and families they would neglect their own spiritual interests. In the spring of 1870, sixty Indian, went to Upper Canada to work in lumber camps, and sixty others were engaged to accompany the Red River expedition to build roads and to do portage work for Garnet Wolseley's soldiers.

The missionary was also worrying over the condition of his church which, notwithstanding previous repairs, was fast becoming unsafe for public worship. For twenty-five years this stone temple, the loftiest building in the village, standing like a sentinel on the shore of Lake St. Louis, had weathered the winds and storms; but it was showing the results of the struggle. The roof was leaking and the plaster was falling down. Once it narrowly escaped destruction, the story of which is worth recording, were it only to note the vagaries



of a flash of lightning; for Father Burtin himself tells us, in his chronicle, that the bolt began by ripping off the cornice from the steeple and breaking all the glass in the windows of the tower. Entering the church through an opening, which was never discovered, it flew to a side altar, stripped off part of the gilding, then ran around the frame of the large painting of St. Louis, leaving marks of its passage but only slightly damaging the canvas. It then passed to the main altar and repeated its antics around the frame of the painting of St. Francis Xavier. The second side altar was also visited, the lightning's passage being clearly traced around the frame of another large painting overhead. After these rapid peregrinations it visited the vestry and attacked the frame of the painting of the Holy Family. It then broke through a door, scattered the woodwork of a window, took refuge in a cupboard filled with flowers, which it reduced to ashes, and pulverized a large plaster vase, leaving four other vases untouched. This ended its orgy of destruction. Fifteen children, who fled in terror from the church when the flash came, escaped unhurt.

The need for repairs was evident for many years previous to 1870, and the chiefs had promised that the revenues of the seigniory would meet the expenses incurred. Unhappily their procrastinating tendencies had left them at last in a position where they could not keep their promise. After the confederation of the Canadian Provinces, in 1867, the revenues of the seigniory of Sault St. Louis

were no longer in their possession, but were held by the Secretary of State at Ottawa, who had in hand the administration of Indian affairs. In 1870, Honourable Joseph Howe, the well-known Nova Scotia statesman, held the office of Secretary of State. Father Burtin appealed to him for aid in August of that year, and was, a few weeks later, gratified by a visit from this high official, who had come to spend a whole Sunday in Caughnawaga for the purpose of consulting with the missionary about his church and about other matters which affected both the Department and the Indians. Howe expressed a desire to assist at High Mass and Vespers, and the grand chief's pew, decorated in Indian fashion, was reserved for him. During the service he was an attentive listener to the chants and to the instruction, but as the chronicler remarked, "the sermon was in Iroquois, and he did not understand." The distinguished visitor was deeply interested in all he saw and heard, and when he took his departure, he was given a vociferous farewell from the mouth of the little village cannon. A short time later, a Government cheque reached Burtin, sufficiently generous to enable him to complete the repairs on his church.

The Indian population in those years numbered thirteen hundred, all of whom were busy in their own peculiar avocations. Only fifty-two farmers were tilling the soil, while the rest of the tribal bread-winners were employed on rafts along the river or wandering over the country selling baskets and beadwork. Others were engaged playing Indian

rôles in circuses; others were peddling Indian herbs and remedies.

In November, 1874, Father Burtin consigned to the grave an Indian woman who had lived to the venerable age of one hundred years. Marie Therèse Kanonwiiostha was the only remaining link of the tribe with the brethren of the eighteenth century. She had been baptized at St. Regis, on November 22, 1774, by Father Antoine Gordan, one of the last Jesuits of the old Order in Canada, and had gone in early childhood to Caughnawaga, where she lived during the rest of her life. Notwithstanding her century of years she had no physical infirmity except a slight deafness. She was a devout Christian; she could be seen wending her way daily to the village church, and she died surrounded by the consolations of her faith.

Prior to her death, Father Burtin wrote to Ottawa asking for some sort of recognition for the venerable woman, but a note from M. de Boucherville, an official of the Department, reached him two days before she passed away: "I regret that Mr. Vankoughnet is not here to acquaint him with your letter relative to the poor centenarian squaw, for whom you ask a present on the occasion of her hundreth anniversary." The old Indian woman did not wait for a gift from the Canadian Government; she went to receive a more precious one from the Author of all good things beyond the skies. That same year, Deputy Superintendent-General Vankoughnet himself wrote a letter to Father Burtin to congratulate him on

the peaceful way in which his Indians conducted themselves during the visit of a circus to Caughnawaga.

Incidents of this kind reveal the harmonious character of the dealings of the Indian Department with the pastor of Caughnawaga, and indicate at the same time the personal interest taken by the officials at Ottawa in the affairs of the village. But Burtin's correspondence also shows that his relations with the Department were not always so affable. In 1878, he applied for a small portion of the Indian fund to print a prayer-book in Iroquois for his people, but he was informed, as his predecessor Marcoux had been informed, that the Department had no money to devote to such objects. The Government at Ottawa would undoubtedly admit that sound morality would benefit the State, but it was not prepared to meet the cost of inculcating it.

Burtin had at heart the moral training of his Indian children, and the task of procuring teachers with the necessary qualifications was not always an easy matter. In those years a knowledge of the Iroquois tongue seems to have been an essential which could not be dispensed with, and the Department had the last word in the appointment of teachers and in the payment of their salaries. Father Burtin had often to be satisfied with persons sent to the village who, while competent enough in purely secular knowledge, were constant dangers to the traditional faith of his flock. The shepherd had a horror of proselytisers,



especially of the camouflaged sort, and the letters he left behind him only too often reveal his anxieties. He was, however, continually on the alert, and when he discovered a wolf in sheep's clothing, trying to pervert his little ones, he was not slow in getting rid of him. One of the distinguishing marks of Burtin's apostolate at Caughnawaga was his inveterate opposition to tract-peddling and liquor-selling, and while he was fully seconded by the Indian Department in his efforts to prevent the latter class from operating in the village, he had to rely on his own tactics to neutralize the influence of the former.

Burtin and his two predecessors led lonely lives, but their time withal was fully occupied. Besides the work of their ministry they corresponded with the Government, edited their annual reports and contributed their share to the numerous manuscript works which had been left to them by the early missionaries. Now and then, however, their days were brightened by the visits of distinguished foreigners, laymen and clergymen, who, while passing through Montreal, felt that their journey would not be complete if they had not seen Caughnawaga. The mission always had a mysterious attraction for men who had read the history of Canada, and a curious interest to see the descendants of the warlike Iroquois in their own homes brought many strangers to the little village.

In September, 1853, Marcoux welcomed Mgr. Cajetan Bedini, Archbishop of Thebes and ex-Apostolic Nuncio to Brazil, then on a tour through

Canada. This distinguished churchman, afterwards raised to the Cardinalate and transferred to the important See of Viterbo and Toscanella, in Italy, had just completed a complimentary mission to the President of the United States. The Know-Nothing movement has run its course in that country; but anti-Catholic feeling was still high, and hostile outbreaks occurred against the Papal representative. The peace and quiet which reigned in Caughnawaga, and the strong faith of the Indians, gave the future Cardinal an occasion to contrast two types of civilization.

In 1854, the little village received the visit of Jean-Jacques Ampère, son of the famous scientist, himself a traveller and author of repute, and a member of the French Academy. In his work, entitled, *Promenade en Amérique*, published two years later, Ampère devoted a whole chapter to his visit to Caughnawaga. Apparently expecting to meet Iroquois life in its primitive wildness, he wrote: "If I was disappointed, on entering the village, at finding the descendants of this powerful and dreaded race playing pitch and toss, I had, in return, the pleasure of buying a pair of moccasins from one Indian woman, who could deal with me only through an interpreter, and of seeing another carrying her babe in a cradle which she held up straight as the beautiful Celuta might have done."<sup>1</sup>

In 1859, Monsignor Valdivieso, Archbishop of Santiago, in Chile, crossed over Lake St. Louis to see the Iroquois. In 1876, four French dele-

1. *Promenade en Amérique*, Paris, 1856, Vol. I, p. 147.

gates, on their way home from the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, arrived at Caughnawaga for the same purpose. These were M. Pieganuy of Paris, and Messieurs Munissier, Cambuzot d'Auxerres and Emile Guimet of Lyons, M. Guimet being secretary of the Academy of Arts and Sciences in his native city. In the following year, the Indians gave a generous welcome to Dr. George Conroy, Bishop of Ardagh, in Ireland, and Apostolic delegate to Canada, triumphal arches being raised in his honour along the street leading from the wharf to the church. As the eminent prelate made clear in a speech in Montreal afterwards, he was deeply impressed with his visit. He had seen and spoken with the Indians and could testify to the influence religion had on their lives. A few years later, it was the turn of the Very Reverend Dom Smeulders, another Pontifical envoy to Canada, who came to receive the homage of the Iroquois and bring them a message from the Father of the Faithful.

In 1884, the British Association for the Advancement of Science met in Montreal. During the intervals between the sessions, learned members made their way over the St. Lawrence to see the famous Iroquois with their own eyes. It always pleased the pastors to take strangers through the village and show them the home life of their dusky flock, or to exhibit objects of which they were the jealous guardians, for instance, the manuscript volumes composed by the early Jesuits, the desk on which Charlevoix is said to have written a portion

of his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, and the altar plate and paintings which came from the Kings of France.

Besides receiving and entertaining visitors, the missionaries were engaged in correspondence with learned societies. At one time it was the Smithsonian Institute of Washington, which wrote to Burtin for a list of the works treating of the Iroquois and the language, a list which was afterwards published in the report issued by the Bureau of Ethnology. At another time, the *Société Anthropologique* of Paris wrote him for information about his Indians. He referred it to the Department at Ottawa and suggested articles written by officials on the subject.

The interest shown by so many foreigners in Caughnawaga and its missionaries gave Burtin the inspiration, after his first years of residence there, to write the history of the mission from its foundation in 1667. He enlisted the services of Abbé Verreau, a deeply-read student of Canadian history, and by their united efforts many documents relating to the mission during the French *régime* were brought together. Burtin spent several years assorting, translating and collating material for his proposed work, but apparently he had no grasp of historic perspective. His documents, gathered together with so much trouble, remained after him, arranged in chronological order, but otherwise an undigested mass, which is the despair of students unfamiliar with his peculiar handwriting. His talents, however, proved useful in another



field. His profound knowledge of the Iroquois language urged him to undertake the compilation of a grammar, which still remains in manuscript form. In the literary line Father Burtin produced little for his Indians or the public except an Iroquois catechism and a short life of Kateri Tekakwitha, which he published after his retirement to Quebec. His strongest claim to the gratitude of posterity are his translations of books of piety, as well as his Indian sermons and instructions, which have lightened the burdens of his successors at Caughnawaga.<sup>1</sup>

The only incident that caused a stir in the village in those years was the departure for Egypt, in 1884, of fifty able-bodied Indians. Lord Garnet Wolseley had not forgotten the valuable aid the Caughnawagas had given him during the Red River expedition of 1870, and when the relief of Khartoum was projected, the British commander called for a contingent of Indian boatmen, skilled in the use of the oar and paddle, to help him and his troops reach General Gordon's beleaguered garrison. There was something unique in the plan of sending the aborigines of the New World to teach Egyptians a few modern Canadian methods of overcoming the numerous and dangerous cataracts of the ancient Nile, and to enjoy some thrilling experiences while doing so.

1. Nicholas Burtin, O. M. I., was a native of Metz, in Alsace, and was born December 16, 1828. When he was adopted by the Iroquois he received the name *Tekaronhianeken*: two skies united—an allusion to France, the land of his birth, and Canada, the land of his adoption. After leaving Caughnawaga, he was stationed at Quebec. He died there, December 28, 1902, a few days after having celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his priestly ordination.



THE RIGHT REV. JOSEPH WILLIAM FORBES

BISHOP OF JOLIETTE

*Formerly missionary at Caughnawaga*



Louis Jackson, chief of the Caughnawaga contingent, published a pamphlet after his return, giving the experiences of the journey. Egypt made little or no impression on the sophisticated Caughnawagas, who through no fault of theirs had only a passing glimpse of the Pyramids, Thebes and Luxor; but the observant eye of Jackson remarked that the natives along the Nile made fences of cornstalks to keep off the sand, "just as we make board fences to keep off the snow." What amused him greatly was their system of ploughing, when the Indian chief saw a team at work such as he had never seen at Caughnawaga: a cow and a small camel yoked together, and drawing a crooked stick through the soil at a speed, as he judged, of an acre a week. However, Indian methods impressed the Egyptians. "Shooting the rapids" amazed sleepy natives who were stationed at every cataract, and who came rushing out of their huts, with their children, dogs and goats, to watch the manœuvring of the American Indians. Success attended the efforts of Chief Jackson and his sturdy crew. In their frail keel-boats they mastered the cataracts of Sumnah, Ambigol, Tangur, Akaska, and Dal, and earned the praises of the British officers who had the responsibility of forwarding supplies to Khartoum. After an absence of nearly a year, during which they lost two of their number, the Caughnawagas came home "well pleased with what they had seen in the land of the Pharaohs, and proud, besides, to have shown the world that the dwellers on the banks of the Nile, after having



navigated it for thousands of years, had something to learn about their trade from the Iroquois of North America.”<sup>1</sup>

The memory of Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks, whose name is already familiar to the reader, was always considered a precious heirloom among the Caughnawaga Indians. Her relics had followed them in the migrations of 1690, 1696 and 1720 along the river-front to the present village, where they are still honourably preserved. All traces of the fortified village at the foot of the Lachine rapid, where she lived and died, had long since been obliterated, but there has always remained with the Indians a mysterious attraction for the spot; even after two hundred years it is still known to them as *Kateri tsi tkaiatai*—the place where Kateri was buried. It lies at the edge of the river, four miles west of Laprairie, where a lofty cross, renewed from time to time, marks the spot and keeps the memory of the Indian maiden fresh in the minds and hearts of her countrymen. One who had long been devoted to her, the Reverend Clarence Walworth, of Albany, resolved that her memory should be perpetuated by something more permanent than a wooden cross, and in the summer of 1900 he had a massive cenotaph laid over her ancient grave. Carved on the face of the huge granite block are the maiden's name, the date of her death, and the words, in her native tongue, ONKWEONWEKE KATSITSIHO TEIOTSITSIANEKARON.

1. *Our Caughnawagas in Egypt*. By LOUIS JACKSON. Drysdale & Co., Montreal, 1885.

In English these Iroquois words mean: *The fairest flower that ever bloomed among true men*—a graceful tribute to the Lily of the Mohawks from the pen of the Abbé Cuoq, a Sulpician and distinguished Indian scholar.

The blessing of this monument was the occasion of an imposing demonstration. It brought distinguished churchmen and several hundred Indians and white people to the foot of the Lachine rapid to hear the wonderful story of her life told in different languages. This chivalrous act of Father Walworth has undoubtedly helped to revive interest in the saintly maiden, and to give a stimulus to pilgrimages among her tribesmen. The enthusiasm which urged the Indians to make the annual visit to the Calvary at Oka now turned them towards the tomb of Kateri, and in later years a pilgrimage to her tomb has become an annual event. A memorial chapel, which it is intended to build at some time in the near future, will also help to extend the fame of the Iroquois maiden whose cause has been submitted to Rome for the honours of beatification.

Among the clergy present at the raising of the monument, in 1890, was the Abbé Forbes, a priest of the diocese of Montreal, who had already spent two years in Caughnawaga studying the language and the character of the Iroquois and preparing himself to replace Father Burtin, whose retirement was then in contemplation. From his first contact with the Caughnawagas, the talented young missionary had become interested in the number of

names of white men borne by the Indians of the village, such as Tarbell, Stacey, Hill, McGregor, Williams, McComber, and others. He was aware that a number of prisoners had been adopted into the tribe in the eighteenth century, but no one had ever tried to trace them up after the tragedy of their capture.

There were genealogical problems still unsolved in Caughnawaga, and when Father Forbes took over the responsibilities of the pastorate, in 1892, he set to work to do for the Indians of Caughnawaga what Monsignor Tanguay had done for the French population of Lower Canada. Unfortunately he was handicapped in his work. The registers of baptisms and marriages dated only from 1735 and 1743, respectively, that is, more than half a century after the foundation of the mission. But with the help of the family traditions which were still vivid among the descendants of the early converts, and with the courage and perseverance of a Benedictine, the missionary started to plod through the registers and to construct the genealogical trees of the families of his flock.<sup>1</sup> He employed

1. Father Burtin was of opinion that Father Gordan took with him to St. Regis, in 1755, a part of the register of baptisms made previous to the year 1735, and that these interesting documents were destroyed in the fire which burned down the church at that mission. The loss is irreparable, as no other copy is known to exist. The number of baptismal entries at Caughnawaga were usually about thirty or forty a year. They were written in Latin and were far from having all the exactness now required by law. The burials and marriages, at least a part of them, were written in another book in abridged form. Most of the marriage entries take up only two lines, wherein the husband is indicated merely by Indian name and surname without any other indication of the family. It was the custom then that each Indian had his own name, so that a father who had five children would write his own name and each of the children would write a different name. This singular custom was found not only among the Iroquois but among other nations in Canada as well, a circumstance that does not make easy the work of tracing Indian genealogies.

the spare moments of several years in this arid task, and success crowned his efforts. For instance, he found that Eunice Williams, one of the Deerfield captives of 1704, had left a posterity of one hundred and twenty-five descendants living in Caughnawaga; that the young boy Silas Rice, who was captured at Marlboro, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1703, and had married into the tribe, had a living posterity, in the year 1900, of over thirteen hundred descendants, and that Jacob Hill, and John Stacey, the two boys taken near Albany, in 1755, and adopted by the tribe, had become the ancestors of fifteen hundred members of the Caughnawaga tribe. Another interesting detail, which the old registers revealed, was that the offspring of Eunice Williams, of Deerfield, and those of Silas Rice, of Marlboro, blended into one by marriage, seventy-five years after the two children had fallen into the hands of their captors.

The unwearied delver proved, from an example as late as 1796, the assertion made elsewhere in this work, namely, that white men often preferred to live with the Indians rather than return to their own country. This was the case of Gervase McComber, a native of Massachusetts, who, notwithstanding the entreaties of his family, refused to leave Caughnawaga after he had gone to live there. He was adopted as one of the tribe and in after life filled important functions in the village. An eloquent, if silent, tribute to the humanity of the Caughnawaga Indians, and to the influence



which Christianity had never ceased to exercise over them since their mission was founded in the seventeenth century!

Father Forbes had done more than any of his predecessors to prepare the material for a history of the tribe. His thorough study of the registers and of the traditions of the village had given him a knowledge which was of the highest value; but he left to others the task of continuing the work. In 1903, he was transferred to another field of labour and the Jesuits were invited to return.<sup>1</sup> A member of the Order, Father Samuel Granger, had arrived in the previous year to prepare himself for the succession, and after an absence of one hundred and twenty years they went back to Caughnawaga to take up the work interrupted by the death of Father Joseph Huguet, in 1783, and to assume the spiritual responsibility for a couple of thousand of the descendants of Tonsohoten and his companions, their own converts of 1667. The whirligig of time works strange transformations; but it was a part of the eternal fitness of things, "that," as Bishop Bourget had insinuated to Marcoux in 1850, "St. Francis Xavier should some day welcome back his brethren to the mission of the Sault Saint-Louis."

1. Monsignor Joseph-Guillaume Forbes was born on Ile Perrot August 10, 1865. After his studies at the college and seminary of Montreal, he was ordained March 17, 1888. He spent fifteen years at Caughnawaga, the last eleven as resident missionary. Transferred to Ste. Anne de Bellevue, in 1903, and to St. John Baptist, Montreal, in 1911, he was appointed to the see of Joliette, in 1913, and was consecrated Bishop on October 9 of that year. Bishop Forbes published a prayer book in the Iroquois tongue (16mo, 568 pp.) and several annuals dealing with affairs of the Caughnawaga mission. His Indian name is *Tenkonikonthathe*: he has a brilliant mind.

With the arrival of the Jesuits this volume may end. Historic Caughnawaga treats of the past; the future must be permitted to take care of itself. Suffice it to say that, since the return of the old Order to its ancient mission, the affairs of the tribe are being looked after with an enthusiasm which recalls the earlier days. During the past twenty years, men of zeal like Fathers Melançon, Granger, and Gras, recognizing the value of the traditions and the examples bequeathed to them by their predecessors, both remote and proximate, have followed and are still following with watchfulness and care the temporal and moral welfare of their dusky flock.<sup>1</sup> They are bending their energies, as missionaries had done before them, towards the uplift of this Iroquois remnant of the seventeenth century, who loyally admit that, if they have survived the wreckage of two hundred and fifty years, it is due to the influence exercised over them by the Christian religion which was wholeheartedly accepted by their warrior forefathers. That influence has continued uninterrupted down the years; from 1667 to the present day the black-robe has ever been the true friend of the Caughnawaga tribe.

The past twenty years have witnessed a number

1. Faithful to their ancient traditions, the Iroquois adopted these three missionaries into their tribe.

During his term of office at Caughnawaga, Arthur Melançon was known as *Tekaronhiakenen*: two skies united, the name borne by Burtin.

Samuel Granger received the name *Kenawentshon*: always day, which, Bishop Forbes has informed us, is the same as *Ondessonk*, borne by the martyr Isaac Jogues.

Joseph Gras, the present pastor of Caughnawaga, is called *Tekronhioken*: between two skies.

of changes in the life of the village, and the introduction of not a few improvements in the habits and customs of the Indians themselves. Homes are neat and tidy; higher ideals than mere animal wants are inculcated; music and other refinements have added an elevating influence to family life in Caughnawaga. The Indian women have, as a general rule, discarded the shawl of their ancestors, and they are not averse, the younger ones especially, to lingering over the pages of the latest books of fashion.

The public health and physical well-being of the Indians had long been a matter of anxiety for those in charge of them. It is pathetic to read in old letters and reports of the lack of scientific treatment which the sick and suffering in the village had to bear in the days when their missionaries—for instance, Marcoux and Burtin—were not merely pastors of souls but doctors of bodies as well, and when kindly but unskilled Indian neighbours had to act as nurses and attend to all the menial wants in the homes of the sick.<sup>1</sup> In after years the systematic visits of physicians to the village took much responsibility off willing shoulders, while the hospitals of Montreal opened their doors to patients who needed more serious attention. But in the twentieth century even the

1. In 1821, Lord Dalhousie refused a petition to appoint a physician for Caughnawaga, such appointments being made only in times of war. In the same note the governor requested that the term *savage* should not be used in respect of any Indian living in civilized society in Lower Canada. He trusted that all the Indians knew and practised the habits and regulations of their civilized neighbours.—*Canadian Archives, Indian Correspondence*. C., p. 307.

poor Indian could reasonably claim the care and treatment given to his more advanced white neighbour.

In 1905, a hospital was established in Caughnawaga and placed in charge of competent nurses whose skill and Christian charity are at the service of all. In this new institution are treated not merely the ordinary ills to which humanity is heir, but also others one would hardly look for in an Indian village. The Iroquois no longer hunt as their ancestors did; barely a fifth of the entire population till the soil; the rest prefer to work on steel bridges and live perched in the air at the top of lofty structures. In this risky trade they have specialized in recent years, and the accidents that occur show the opportuneness of a local hospital which was not needed in less strenuous years. Thé little row of graves in their village cemetery, recalling the Quebec bridge disaster of 1907, in which forty of them lost their lives, are reminders that as long as they are engaged in such employments they are not immune from danger to life and limb.

But in the past twenty years it is rather in the domain of education that Caughnawaga has witnessed the most important changes. Readers of these pages will recall the efforts of Marcoux and Burtin to impart a smattering of intellectual training to the children of their flock and at the same time safeguard their traditional faith, without which mere instruction would have profited them little. Happily those nineteenth-century struggles



have practically ended. For several years the two Indian industrial schools at Wikwemikong, on Manitoulin Island, received children of the Caughnawaga Indians. The boys were trained by the lay-brothers of the Jesuit Order, while the girls were carefully looked after by a band of zealous women whose long experience among the Indians had given them an unrivalled efficiency in their chosen profession. Thus the Indian children of both sexes were educated according to their needs and taught practical trades, which would enable them to earn their living honourably. A few years ago, these schools were transferred to Spanish, on Georgian Bay, where the admirable work is being encouraged and subsidized by the Canadian Government.

In Caughnawaga itself the Government has built modern schools for the Iroquois, and the enlightened sympathy of Mr. Duncan Campbell Scott, the deputy superintendent-general of Indian Affairs, has enabled the missionaries to enlist as teachers of the Indian children an Order of women—the Sisterhood of Ste. Anne—whose work in the village is already producing results. Contrary to the impression which Paul Bourget, the French writer, carried away with him, after his visit in 1894, namely, that there is a limit prescribed by blood beyond which an Indian race cannot be educated,<sup>1</sup> it will only be necessary to spend a day or two in Caughnawaga and to come in contact with dozens

1. *Ouvre-Mer*, Vol. II, p. 221.

of tawny-skinned, dark-eyed children, to see how well gentleness and piety and refinement are keeping pace with purely secular training.

These Indian children will be the men and women of the next generation; they are having opportunities of which their fathers and mothers were deprived. And yet the Iroquois of to-day are living in a marvellous age and are sharing in its advantages. They own automobiles and are ready to risk their lives in them; they use the telephone in communicating with the outside world; wireless telegraphy is no longer a mystery to them; nor do aviators flying over their village get more than a passing glance. They read the newspapers and discuss politics. They fought in Flanders and shed their blood for the sake of Democracy. They boast of having shaken hands with governors and foreign ambassadors at home and abroad. They welcomed to Caughnawaga a Russian consul-general, a State councillor of France, a mayor of Montreal. They had the pleasure of listening to the thrilling voice of Emma Calvé, the famous soprano, who sang for them in their village church. Men like Theodore Botrel, the poet of Brittany, Father Bernard Vaughan, the Jesuit orator, Count de Lesseps and Lieutenant Flachaire, both distinguished aviators, and dozens of other celebrities, sought and received honorary affiliation in the tribe.

The Iroquois of Caughnawaga are riding on the tide; what of the generation which will succeed them? In 1890, they abandoned the system of

tribal chiefs, under which for centuries they were content to live, and, like their pale-faced neighbours, they are now governed by municipal laws. With the wider outlook which a more thorough civic education is giving them and with the franchise of citizenship at their disposal for the asking, one may safely predict an evolution in Indian life during the next few years that would undoubtedly surprise Tonsohoten and the proto-converts of 1667, were they to visit their old mission after an absence of two hundred and fifty years.

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